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"Well, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, as his valet appeared at his bed-room door, just as he was concluding his toilet; "all alive to-day, I suppose?"

"Reg'lar game, sir," replied Mr. Weller; "our people's a collecting down at the Town Arms, and they're a hollering themselves hoarse already."

"Ah," said Mr. Pickwick, "do they seem devoted to their party, Sam?"

"Never see such dewotion in my life, sir."

"Energetic, eh?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Uncommon," replied Sam; "I never see men eat and drink so much afore. I wonder they a'nt afeer'd o' bustin."

"That's the mistaken kindness of the gentry here," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Werry likely," replied Sam, briefly.

"Fine, fresh, hearty fellows they seem," said Mr. Pickwick, glancing from the window.

"Werry fresh," replied Sam; "me, and the two waiters at the Peacock, has been a pumpin' over the independent woters as supped there last night."

"Pumping over independent voters!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Yes," said his attendant, "every man slept vere he fell down; we dragged 'em out, one by one, this mornin' and put 'em under the pump, and they're in reg'lar fine order, now. Shillin' a head the committee paid for that 'ere job."

"Can such things be?" exclaimed the astonished Mr. Pickwick.

"Lord bless your heart, sir," said Sam, "why where was you half baptized?—that's nothin', that a'nt."

"Nothing?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Nothin' at all, sir," replied his attendant. "The night afore the last day o' the last election here, the opposite party bribed the bar-maid at the Town Arms, to hocus the brandy and water of fourteen unpolled electors as was a stoppin' in the house."

"What do you mean by 'hoccussing' brandy and water?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Puttin' laud'nium in it," replied Sam. "Blessed if she didn't send 'em all to sleep till twelve hours arter the election was over. They took one man up to the booth, in a truck, fast asleep, by way of experiment, but it was no go—they wouldn't poll him; so they brought him back, and put him to bed again."

"Strange practices, these," said Mr. Pickwick; half speaking to himself, and half addressing Sam.

"Not half so strange as a miraculous circumstance as happened to my own father, at an election-time, in this werry place, sir," replied Sam.

"What was that?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Why he drove a coach down here once," said Sam; "'Llection time came on, and he was engaged by vun party to bring down woters from London. Night afore he was a going to drive up, committee on t'other side sends for him quietly, and away he goes with the messenger, who shows him in;—large room—lots of gen'l'm'n—heaps of papers, pens and ink, and all that 'ere. 'Ah, Mr. Weller,' says the gen'l'm'n in the chair, 'glad to see you, sir; how are you?—'

"Werry well, thank'ee, sir," says my father; 'I hope *you're* pretty middlin,' says he—'Pretty well, thank'ee, sir,' says the gen'l'm'n; 'sit down, Mr. Weller—pray sit down, sir.' So my father sits down, and he and the gen'l'm'n looks werry hard at each other. 'You don't remember me?' says the



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to  
Ladies.**



**THE NORWICH COMPANY'S CELEBRATED 3 & 6-CORD  
SEWING, KNITTING, AND NETTING COTTON.**

The attention of Ladies is particularly requested to this novel article, as being of the most beautiful uniform texture yet produced; it is wound on reels, labelled as above, in lengths of 100, 200, and 300 yards. The Six-cord, in addition to being the very best Cotton for sewing, is especially adapted for KNITTING, NETTING, and CROCHET. To be had at all the most respectable Mercers, Drapers, Haberdashers, and Beer Repositories in the kingdom; and wholesale only of the Proprietors, Messrs. J. L. BARBER & Co., Norwich and of their Agent in London, Mr. W. W. TRIPP, 35, Friday Street, Cheapside.

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

**KEATING'S COUGH LOZENGES**

Are indispensably necessary during the present severe season, both for the Cure and Prevention of Coughs, ASTHMATIC, and all PULMONARY COMPLAINTS.

Prepared and sold in Boxes, 1s. 1½d., and Tins, 2s. 9d., 4s. 6d., and 10s. 6d. each, by THOMAS KEATING Chemist, &c., No. 79, St. Paul's Church Yard, London.

Sold retail by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Vendors in the Kingdom.

**IMPORTANT TESTIMONIALS.**

Copy of a Letter from COLONEL HAWKER, (the well-known Author on "GUNS AND SHOOTING").  
*Longparish House, near Whitchurch,  
Hants, October 21st, 1846.*

SIR,—I cannot resist informing you of the extraordinary effect that I have experienced by taking only a few of your Lozenges. I had a cough for several weeks, that defied all that had been prescribed for me; and yet I got completely rid of it by taking about half a small box of your Lozenges, which I find are the only ones that relieve the cough without deranging the stomach or digestive organs.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,  
P. HAWKER.

To Mr. KEATING, &c., 79, St. Paul's Church Yard,  
London.

N.B. To prevent spurious imitations, please to observe that the words "KEATING'S COUGH LOZENGES" are on the GOVERNMENT STAMP of each Box.

*Birkenhead, near Liverpool, Jan. 8, 1847.*

SIR,—I have been afflicted with a severe cough and shortness of breath for nearly eight years, and after trying numerous remedies, did not find myself any better. I purchased a small box of Mr. Keating's Lozenges of you, from which I found great benefit. The second box, 2s. 9d. size, completely cured me, and I can now breathe more freely, and am as free from cough as ever I was in my life. Hoping that others, similarly afflicted, will avail themselves of certain a remedy.

I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,  
WILLIAM ANDERSON.

Mr. GEO. HOWELL, Chemist,  
72, Dale-street, Liverpool.

**STOOPING OF THE SHOULDERS & CONTRACTION OF THE CHEST**



Are entirely prevented, and gently and effectually removed in Youth, and Ladies and Gentlemen, by the occasional use of the **IMPROVED ELASTIC CHEST EXPANDER**, which is light, simple, easily applied, either above or beneath the dress, and worn without any uncomfortable constraint or impediment to exercise. To Young Persons especially it is highly beneficial, immediately producing an evident IMPROVEMENT in the FIGURE, and tending greatly to prevent the incursion of PULMONARY DISEASES; whilst to the Invalid, and those much engaged in sedentary pursuits, such as Reading or Studying, Working, Drawing, or Music, it is found to be invaluable, as it expands the Chest and affords a great support to the back. It is made in Silk: and can be forwarded, per post, by Mr. ALFRED BINYON, Sole Manufacturer and Proprietor, No. 40, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, London; or full particulars, with Prices and Mode of Measurement, on receipt of a Postage Stamp.





## MEERSCHAUM PIPES.

### I. INDERWICK & COMPANY,

59, PRINCES STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE,  
Beg respectfully to inform the Nobility, Gentry, and  
the Trade generally that they have just received a fine  
assortment of

### PURE MEERSCHAUM PIPES

Of the First Quality, to which they invite attention.

### For Purifying the Blood and Strengthening the Digestive Organs.

### FRENCH'S SARSAPARILLA AND

CHAMOMILE, a concentrated Fluid Extract of these well-known, valuable medicines. It is suited for either sex, and will prove a certain cure for Indigestion, Loss of Appetite, Dimness of Sight, Fainting Fits, Wasting of the Flesh, Languor, Skin diseases, Rheumatic and Nervous affections, and all impurities of Blood caused by unhealthy climates, too sedentary a life, Dissipation, or other causes. However debilitated the system, or deep-rooted the disease, by the diligent use of this purifying medicine the energies of the whole nervous system will be augmented, a more powerful and healthy action of every faculty produced, and feebleness, and all the deplorable symptoms of disease will vanish, and strength and health be restored to the feeble and afflicted by its restorative properties. Prepared only by W. A. FRENCH, 309, Holborn, two doors west of Chancery Lane. Price 2s. 9d., 4s. 6d., 11s., and 22s.

### FINE FLOWING RINGLETS.

### THE Care of the Hair in Infants and

Young Children is by inexperienced mothers and nurses, too little regarded. No mistake can be more injurious than the supposition that neglect in this particular can continue with impunity. The seeds of strength or weakness are laid in the nursery; and the majority of the fine flowing ringlets, or bald heads, of after years, are traceable to this early period.

### OLDRIDGE'S BALM OF COLUMBIA,

long celebrated for its genial and invigorating qualities, in promoting and restoring the growth of the Hair, is peculiarly fitted (applied according to the printed directions) for application during the tender years of infancy and childhood; and no nursery where personal advantages are held in any estimation should be without it.

Price 3s. 6d., 6s., and 11s. per Bottle; no other prices.

OLDRIDGE'S BALM, 1, Wellington Street, (the second house from the Strand), London.

### BERDOE'S LIGHT OVER-

COAT for the SPRING and SUMMER, (intended also in warm weather in lieu of an Under-Coat.) The WATERPROOF PALLIUM possesses especial claims to the attention of the respectable public, its superior quality, gentlemanly appearance, and well-known efficiency, continue to sustain its established reputation as the most convenient, economical, and permanently popular garment ever invented. An extensive assortment kept to select from, or made to order at a day's notice.

W. BERDOE, TAILOR AND OVER-COAT MAKER, 95, New Bond Street, near Oxford Street; and 69, Cornhill (North side.)

### BAD COUGHS AND COLDS

CURED BY HOLLOWAY'S OINTMENT AND PILLS.—All coughs and colds affect more or less the lungs and other respiratory organs. Thus few remedies have any power in their cure when of long standing, for the reason that they do not reach the parts affected. Now, when there are any symptoms of asthma, or tightness of the chest, or difficulty of breathing, if, night and morning, Holloway's Ointment be well rubbed into the throat and chest, all fever and inflammation will be removed, the breathing become free, and the cough cease, providing a few doses of Holloway's Pills be taken according to the printed directions. Sold by all Druggists; and at Professor HOLLOWAY'S Establishment, 244, Strand, London.

## EDMISTON & SON, TAILORS AND TROUSERS MAKERS,

69, STRAND, LONDON.

OPPOSITE THE ADELPHI THEATRE.

### JONES'S £4 4s. 0d. Silver, and

£12 12s. 0d. GOLD LEVER WATCHES, at 338, Strand, opposite Somerset House. Warranted not to vary more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  a minute per week. Mathematically true and elegant. On receipt of a Post Office Order for 1s. above the Price, one will be forwarded free to any part of the Kingdom.

### SMITH'S GOLD REVIVER, 1s. 6d.

per Bottle, gives in one instant the splendour of new gilding to the most disfigured frames, by merely touching the surface. GOLD VARNISH, 1s. 6d., regilds defects. May be applied by any one. ELECTRO-PLATING LIQUID SILVER, 1s., puts a durable coating of pure Silver upon the Copper parts of worn plated articles. Cost and trouble less than cleaning. Sole Manufacturer, Smith, 281, Strand, (exactly opposite Norfolk Street).

### CHUBB'S LOCKS AND FIRE-

PROOF SAFES.—CHUBB'S New Patent Detector Locks give perfect security from false Keys, and also detect any attempt to open them.

CHUBB'S Patent Fire-proof Safes and Boxes are the best preservatives of deeds, books, plate, &c., from fire and thieves.

Cash Boxes, and Japan Deed Boxes, Street Door Locks with very neat Keys.

C. CHUBB and SON, 57, St. Paul's Churchyard, London; and 28, Lord-street, Liverpool.

### THE ATRAPILATORY, or

LIQUID HAIR DYE; the only dye that really answers for all colours, and does not require re-doing, but as the hair grows, as it never fades or acquires that unnatural red or purple tint common to all other dyes. BOTANIC WATER and BEAR'S GREASE.—When the hair is becoming thin and falling off, the only effectual remedy besides shaving the head is the use of the two above-named articles, applied alternately—the botanic water to cleanse the roots from scurf, and as a stimulant, and the bear's grease as a nourisher. THE NEW TOOTH-PICK BRUSH, thoroughly cleansing between the teeth, when used up and down, and polishing the surface when used cross-ways. The hair warranted never to come out. THE UNION and TRIPLE HAIR BRUSHES. THE DOUBLE ANTIPRESSURE NAIL BRUSH. THE MEDIUM SHAVING BRUSH. THE RAILWAY STROP and POWDER. The above new and elegant articles, in addition to a very extensive assortment of beautiful PERFUMES, are the sole MANUFACTURERS and INVENTIONS of MESSRS. ROSS and SONS, 119 and 120, Bishopsgate-street, London.

### TO THE LADIES.

The high and universal celebrity which

### ROWLAND'S KALYDOR

continues to maintain, as an active yet mild and soothing extirpator of all impurities of the skin, is, during the period of Spring, most pleasingly evinced. This preparation, eminently balsamic, restorative, and invigorating, is equally celebrated for safety in application, as for unfailing efficacy in removing all impurities and discolorations; and imparting a healthy freshness and transparency of Skin and Complexion. Its universally great demand excites the cupidity of unprincipled Shopkeepers, who give the title of "KALYDOR" to compounds of their own manufacture, of the most deleterious character, containing mineral astringents utterly ruinous to the Complexion, and, by their repellent action, endangering health. It is therefore imperative on purchasers to see that the words "ROWLAND'S KALYDOR" are on the wrapper.

Price 4s. 6d. and 8s. 6d. per bottle. Sold by the Proprietors, at 20, Hatton Garden, London, and by all respectable Chemists and Perfumers.

# SOVEREIGN LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY

No. 5, ST. JAMES'S STREET, LONDON.

SIR A. BRYDGES HENNIKER, BART.  
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SOLICITORS.—Messrs. DAVIES, SON, and CAMPBELL.

Assurances on the lives of persons in every station of life and every part of the world, granted on a  
which combines the utmost amount of benefit to the families of the assured at death, with every attainable  
vantage during life, which the system of Life Assurance is capable of affording.  
Perfect security in a subscribed Capital, which guarantees the prompt settlement of every claim, with  
participating and nonparticipating rates on the lowest scale, especially for terms of years.

The Assured can anticipate or obtain the advance of the full amount of the Policy, on giving appro-  
available security for a certain number of annual payments, as explained by the Prospectus.  
Every facility afforded to persons assuring the lives of others, so as to render such Policies effectual securi-  
cannot, without inconvenience, undertake the payment of a fixed premium, securing at once provision  
case of premature death, and an accumulating fund, available during life, should occasion require.  
ANNUITIES, ENDOWMENTS, ADVANCES, and LOANS, on liberal terms.

Detailed Prospectuses, forms of Proposal, and every information, may be had on application, either person-  
or by letter, at the Company's Offices.  
The usual commission to Solicitors and Agents.

H. D. DAVENPORT, Secretary.

## CLARKE'S PATENT MORTAR LAMPS & LAMP MORTARS



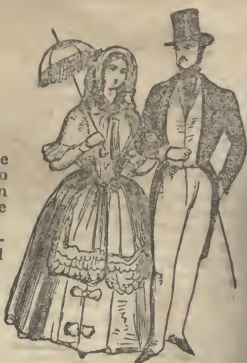
THESE incomparable night lamps are now manufactured in beautifully pla-  
coloured, and painted glass, and in papier maché, which, with the great improv-  
ments that have been made in the Lamp Mortars, render them, without exception,  
the most elegant and perfect night light ever invented. Price of Lamps, 1s. 6d. and  
upwards; Mortars 7d. per box, double boxes 1s. 2d. each. Clarke's Patent Nurse  
Lamps.—This Lamp burns the patent lamp mortars, and will be found invaluable  
not only in the nursery but in the bachelor's room. It will keep hot a quart of water  
or a pint of food and pint of water, at an expense of one halfpenny for six hours, be-  
sides serving as an excellent night light. It is entirely free from smell or smoke,  
and may be carried about with perfect safety.—May be obtained retail from most re-  
spectable ironmongers, grocers, and oilmen in the kingdom, and wholesale at the Patentee's Lamp Manufactory  
55, Albany Street, Regent's Park.



## PARASOLS.

In returning thanks for the very great patronage  
they have received, W. & J. SANGSTER beg to  
call the attention of Ladies to an improvement in  
Parasols, which they have registered under the title  
of the Indian.

This invention consists of an invisible band of elas-  
tic material, which, by contracting when the Parasol  
is closed, keeps it so at the will of the wearer.  
Every lady well knows that the silk of a Parasol is  
cut before it is fairly worn out, by the friction of the  
ring, which has hitherto been indispensable on  
account of the inconvenience attending bands and  
clasps of all descriptions.



SANGSTERS, PATENTEES OF THE SYLPHIDE PARASOL,  
140, REGENT STREET; 10, ROYAL EXCHANGE; & 94, FLEET STREET.

**REFORM YOUR TAILORS' BILLS.**  
**DOUDNEY & SON, 49, LOMBARD STREET.**  
**ESTABLISHED 1784.**



# NUMBER ONE, SAINT PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.



## DAKIN AND COMPY., TEA MERCHANTS.

The BEST COFFEE, whether choice *old Mountain Mocha* or *Jamaica*, 2s. per pound.  
COFFEES, mellow in ripeness and richness of flavour, 1s. 6d. and 1s. 8d. per pound.  
Good strong, full-flavoured Coffees, 1s. 2d. and 1s. 4d. per pound.  
Inferior kinds from 9d. per pound and upwards.

These are the prices of some of our Coffees. The best is 2s. per pound—and the Best is the Best—if people can only get hold of it—but how few can! and why? Because they are always being told that the Best can be supplied at 1s. 9d. per pound—now the best can *not* be sold at that price. Our Best is 2s. per pound, and we trust we

### HAVE NOW ESTABLISHED

it as the Best; for it is in reality the very best and choicest *old Coffee* imported. It is far better than the Best of the Bests frequently spoken of; it is in verity and truth the very Best, and we pledge ourselves most sincerely that it shall give every and unqualified satisfaction to the consumer. Taste and prove its excellence.

Again, we respectfully solicit attention to the Coffee we sell at 1s. 8d. per pound, and invite comparison.

### THE PRINCIPLE

to which we look for success, with that commonly known as the Best, and if ours be not the better, we are content that all our assertions be considered vain and empty; and so convinced are we of the superior quality of this widely approved good Coffee, that we are satisfied to stand or fall by the result.

To enable the public to prove as much as possible, without tasting the Coffee, the truth of what we have just stated, we will endeavour to show the present market value of some of the principal sorts, as space will not permit us mentioning many, and we will add the price at which we are in the habit

### OF SELLING RETAIL.

	Price per cwt. for Raw Coffee.		British duty.	Selling price at "Number One," for roasted Coffee.			
	s.	s.		At per cwt.		At per pound.	
JAMAICA, ordinary to middling	28	70	4d and 5 per cent.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Good middling to fine qualities	75	130	4d and 5 per cent.	84 0	144 8	or 0 9	to 1 3½
Ceylon, ordinary to low middling	49	58	4d and 5 per cent.	149 0	224 0	1 4	2 0
Middling to fine plantation	60	95	4d and 5 per cent.	107 4	130 8	0 11½	1 2
BERBICE and DEMERARA	30	80	4d and 5 per cent.	133 0	177 4	1 2½	1 7
DOMINICA and ST. LUCIA	30	75	4d and 5 per cent.	88 8	156 4	0 9½	1 4½
MOCHA	50	100	6d and 5 per cent.	133 0	151 8	0 9½	1 4½
COSTA RICA	33	60	6d and 5 per cent.	144 8	224 0	1 3½	2 0
JAVA	35	54	6d and 5 per cent.	121 4	156 4	1 1	1 4½
CUBA, &c. &c.	37	80	6d and 5 per cent.	128 3	140 4	1 1½	1 4
				120 4	182 0	1 1½	1 7½

By the above list it will be noticed that we supply the public retail not only

### AT WHOLESALE PRICES,

but **AT MERCHANTS' PRICES**, which, being ourselves merchants, we are enabled to do and give them every advantage. This is the principle on which our business was based, and which has already met with such gratifying and remunerating success, for prosperity and public favour has hitherto attended, and we respectfully hope will ultimately crown our great undertaking, the object of which has been to bring the growers and producers of, we may now say, the necessities of life in direct communication with the consumers, more particularly for the great benefit of the latter.

The visitors to London are fearlessly assured, that they may save a considerable portion of their railway expenses by purchasing Coffees as well as Teas

### AT NUMBER ONE, SAINT PAUL'S CHURCHYARD,

which is the very centre of England's Metropolis, and a position more easily identified than any in LONDON.

## DAKIN AND COMPY., TEA MERCHANTS.

AGENTS WANTED.

## THE GENTLEMAN'S REAL HEAD OF HAIR, or INVISIBLE PERU

The principle upon which this Peruke is made is so superior to everything yet produced, that the Manufacturer invites the honour of a visit from the Sceptic and the Connoisseur, that one may be convinced and the other gratified, by inspecting this and other novel and beautiful specimens of the Perruquean Art, at the establishment of the Sole Inventor, F. BROWNE, 47, FENCHURCH-ST.

### F. BROWNE'S INFALLIBLE MODE OF MEASURING THE HEAD.

Round the head in manner of a fillet, leaving the Ears loose .....

As dotted 1 to 1. Inches, Eighthths

From the Forehead over to the poll, as deep each way as required .....

As dotted 2 to 2.

From one Temple to the other, across the rise or Crown of the head to where the Hair grows

As marked 3 to 3.



THE CHARGE FOR THIS UNIQUE HEAD OF HAIR ONLY £1 10s.



Brown 4s. 6d. per bottle,  
Pale 5s. ditto.



3s. per bottle.



10s. per doz. large bottles  
7s. per doz. small ditto  
exclusive of carriage from  
London.

## "THE STANDARD OF COGNAC,"

WHICH IS THE BEST FOREIGN BRANDY.

**THE PATENT BRANDY, AND THE GENUINE SELTERS WATER**

protected by the Patent Metallic Capsule, the only sure and self-evident safeguard against adulteration, can be obtained throughout the Kingdom at the respective prices above mentioned, or at 7, SMITHFIELD BARS, AND 96, ST. JOHN'S STREET, LONDON.



## THE LONDON GENERAL MOURNING WAREHOUSE,

Nos. 247, 249, and 251, REGENT STREET, two doors from Oxford Street.

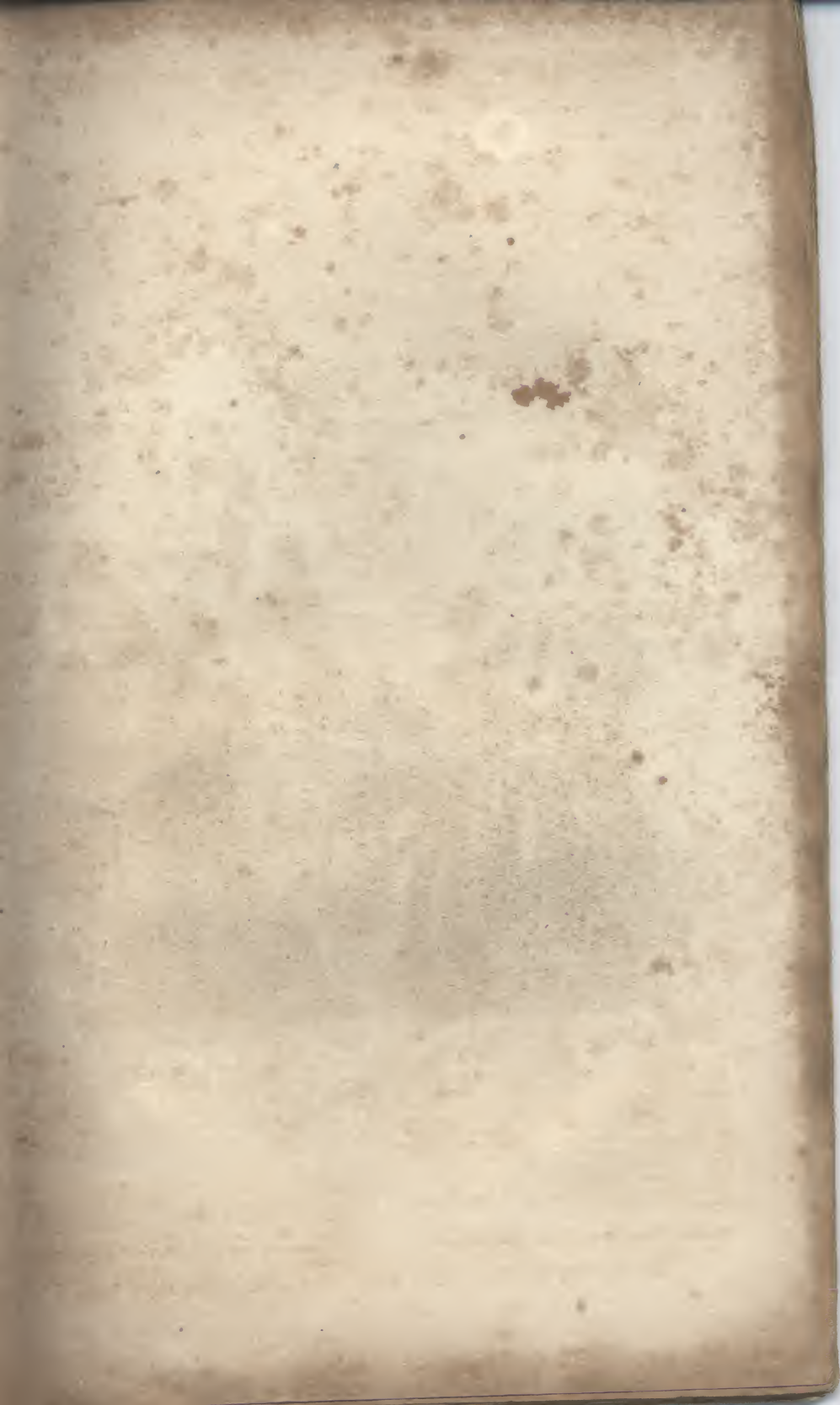
The Proprietors of the above Establishment beg leave to call the attention of the Nobility and Ladies to its great utility. It has ever been a source of inconvenience and regret, on occasions when Mourning Attire has been required, that its purchasers have at such a time been compelled to the painful necessity of proceeding from shop to shop in search of each distinct article of dress. This may be completely obviated by a visit to the London General Mourning Warehouse, where every description of Paramatta, Alapine, Bombasin, Merino, and Crape, where everything necessary for a complete Outfit of Mourning may be had, and made up, if required, by experienced Artists, with the strictest attention to taste, elegance, and economy. Widows' and Family Mourning is always kept made up, so that Ladies may by a Note, descriptive of Mourning required (either for themselves or household), have it forwarded to them in Town or Country immediately. Silks for slight or Complimentary Mourning, Printed Muslin Dresses, Mousseline de Laines, Barèges, and Evening Dresses, in the greatest variety

### THE MILLINERY ROOMS

contain a beautiful assortment of Millinery, Head Dresses, Flowers, Crape and Muslin Collars, Berthes, &c., with every description of Jewellery for Mourning.

**W. C. Jay & Co., 247, 249, and 251, Regent-street.**





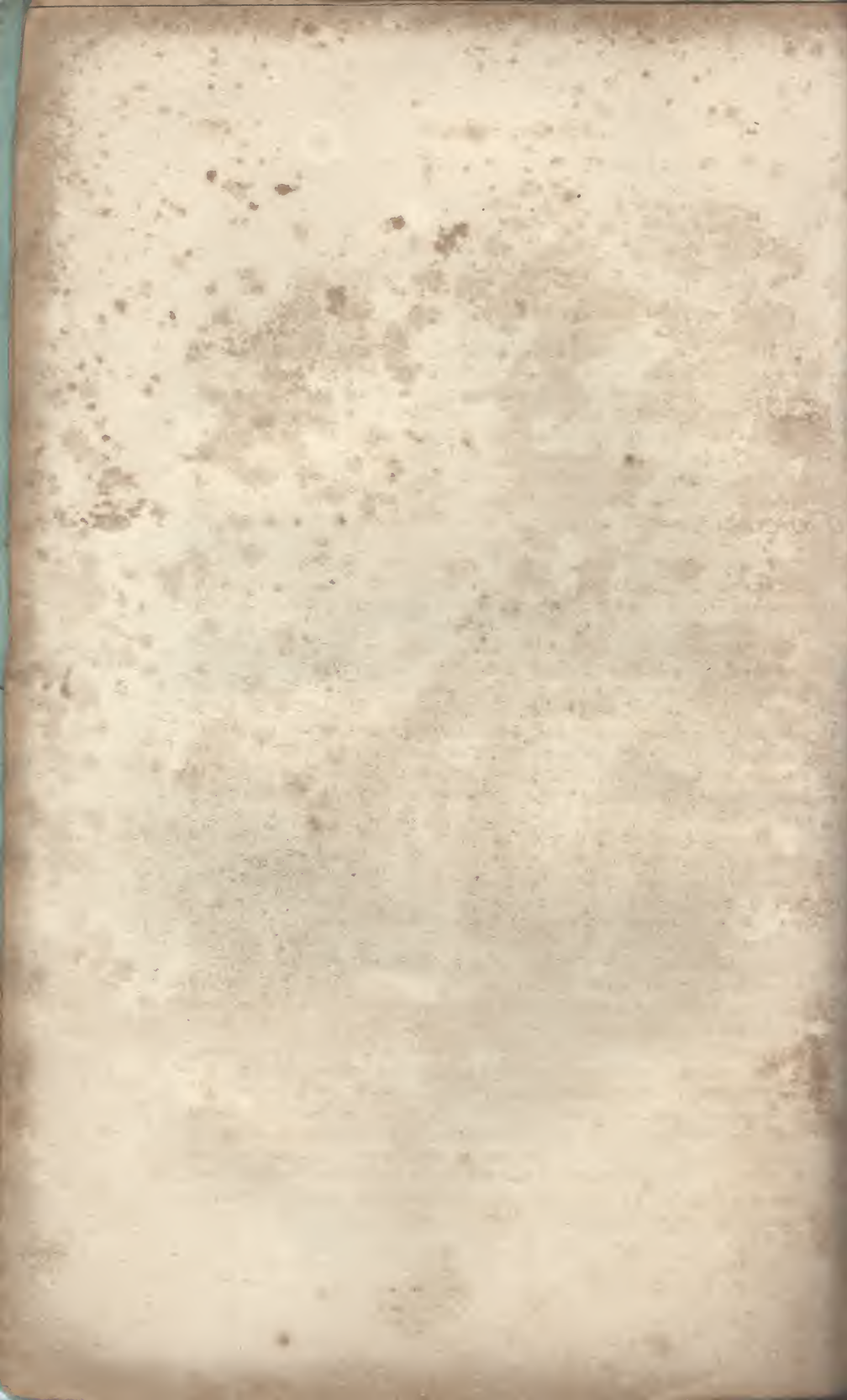


*Mayor Bagstock is delighted to have that opportunity.*





*Mr. Teats become particular - Dugones also*





CHAPTER XX.

MR. DOMBEY GOES UPON A JOURNEY.

"MR. DOMBEY, Sir," said Major Bagstock, "Joey B. is not in general a man of sentiment, for Joseph is tough. But Joe has his feelings, Sir, and when they *are* awakened—Damme Mr. Dombey," cried the Major with sudden ferocity, "this is weakness, and I won't submit to it!"

Major Bagstock delivered himself of these expressions on receiving Mr. Dombey as his guest at the head of his own staircase in Princess's Place. Mr. Dombey had come to breakfast with the Major, previous to their setting forth on their trip; and the ill-starred Native had already undergone a world of misery arising out of the muffins, while, in connexion with the general question of boiled eggs, life was a burden to him.

"It is not for an old soldier of the Bagstock breed," observed the Major, relapsing into a mild state, "to deliver himself up, a prey to his own emotions; but—damme Sir," cried the Major, in another spasm of ferocity, "I condole with you!"

The Major's purple visage deepened in its hue, and the Major's lobster eyes stood out in bolder relief, as he shook Mr. Dombey by the hand, imparting to that peaceful action as defiant a character as if it had been the prelude to his immediately boxing Mr. Dombey for a thousand pounds a side and the championship of England. With a rotatory motion of his head, and a wheeze very like the cough of a horse, the Major then conducted his visitor to the sitting-room, and there welcomed him (having now composed his feelings) with the freedom and frankness of a travelling companion.

"Dombey," said the Major, "I'm glad to see you. I'm proud to see you. There are not many men in Europe to whom J. Bagstock would say that—for Josh is blunt, Sir: it's his nature—but Joey B. is proud to see you, Dombey."

"Major," returned Mr. Dombey, "you are very obliging."

"No, Sir," said the Major, "Devil a bit! That's not my character. If that had been Joe's character, Joe might have been, by this time, Lieutenant-General Sir Joseph Bagstock, K.C.B., and might have received you in very different quarters. You don't know old Joe yet, I find. But this occasion, being special, is a source of pride to me. By the Lord, Sir," said the Major resolutely, "it's an honour to me!"

Mr. Dombey, in his estimation of himself and his money, felt that this was very true, and therefore did not dispute the point. But the instinctive recognition of such a truth by the Major, and his plain avowal of it, were very agreeable. It was a confirmation to Mr. Dombey, if he had required any, of his not being mistaken in the Major. It was an assurance to him that his power extended beyond his own immediate sphere; and that the Major as an officer and a gentleman, had a no less becoming sense of it, than the beadle of the Royal Exchange.

And if it were ever consolatory to know this, or the like of this, it was consolatory then, when the impotence of his will, the instability of his hopes, the feebleness of wealth, had been so direfully impressed upon him. What could it do, his boy had asked him. Sometimes, thinking of the baby question, he could hardly forbear inquiring, himself, what *could* it do indeed: what had it done?

But these were lonely thoughts, bred late at night in the sullen despondency and gloom of his retirement, and pride easily found its re-assurance in many testimonies to the truth, as unimpeachable and precious as the Major's. Mr. Dombey, in his friendlessness, inclined to the Major. It cannot be said that he warmed towards him, but he thawed a little. The Major had had some part—and not too much—in the days by the seaside. He was a man of the world, and knew some great people. He talked much, and told stories; and Mr. Dombey was disposed to regard him as a choice spirit who shone in society, and who had not that poisonous ingredient of poverty with which choice spirits in general are too much adulterated. His station was undeniable. Altogether the Major was a creditable companion, well accustomed to a life of leisure, and to such places as that they were about to visit, and having an air of gentlemanly ease about him that mixed well enough with his own city character, and did not compete with it at all. If Mr. Dombey had any lingering idea that the Major, as a man accustomed, in the way of his calling, to make light of the ruthless hand that had lately crushed his hopes, might unconsciously impart some useful philosophy to him, and scare away his weak regrets, he hid it from himself, and left it lying at the bottom of his pride, unexamined.

"Where is my scoundrel!" said the Major, looking wrathfully round the room.

The Native, who had no particular name, but answered to any vituperative epithet, presented himself instantly at the door and ventured to come no nearer.

"You villain!" said the choleric Major, "where's the breakfast?"

The dark servant disappeared in search of it, and was quickly heard reascending the stairs in such a tremulous state, that the plates and dishes on the tray he carried, trembling sympathetically as he came, rattled again, all the way up.

"Dombey," said the Major, glancing at the Native as he arranged the table, and encouraging him with an awful shake of his fist when he upset a spoon, "here is a devilled grill, a savoury pie, a dish of kidneys, and so forth. Pray sit down. Old Joe can give you nothing but camp fare, you see."

"Very excellent fare, Major," replied his guest; and not in mere politeness either; for the Major always took the best possible care of himself, and indeed ate rather more of rich meats than was good for him, insomuch that his Imperial complexion was mainly referred by the faculty to that circumstance.

"You have been looking over the way Sir," observed the Major.

"Have you seen our friend?"

"You mean Miss Tox," retorted Mr. Dombey. "No."

"Charming woman, Sir," said the Major, with a fat laugh rising in his short throat, and nearly suffocating him.



"Miss Tox is a very good sort of person, I believe," replied Mr. Dombey.

The haughty coldness of the reply seemed to afford Major Bagstock infinite delight. He swelled and swelled, exceedingly: and even laid down his knife and fork for a moment, to rub his hands.

"Old Joe, Sir," said the Major, "was a bit of a favourite in that quarter once. But Joe has had his day. J. Bagstock is extinguished—outrivalled—floored, Sir. I tell you what, Dombey." The Major paused in his eating, and looked mysteriously indignant. "That's a de-vilish ambitious woman, Sir."

Mr. Dombey said "Indeed!" with frigid indifference: mingled perhaps with some contemptuous incredulity as to Miss Tox having the presumption to harbour such a superior quality.

"That woman, Sir," said the Major, "is, in her way, a Lucifer. Joey B. has had his day Sir, but he keeps his eyes. He sees, does Joe. His Royal Highness the late Duke of York observed of Joey, at a levee, that he saw."

The Major accompanied this with such a look, and, between eating, drinking, hot tea, devilled grill, muffins, and meaning, was altogether so swollen and inflamed about the head, that even Mr. Dombey showed some anxiety for him.

"That ridiculous old spectacle, Sir," pursued the Major, "aspires. She aspires sky-high, Sir. Matrimonially, Dombey."

"I am sorry for her," said Mr. Dombey.

"Don't say that, Dombey," returned the Major in a warning voice.

"Why should I not, Major?" said Mr. Dombey.

The Major gave no answer but the horse's cough, and went on eating vigorously.

"She has taken an interest in your household," said the Major, stopping short again, "and been a frequent visitor at your house for some time now."

"Yes," replied Mr. Dombey with great stateliness, "Miss Tox was originally received there, at the time of Mrs. Dombey's death, as a friend of my sister's; and being a well-behaved person, and showing a liking for the poor infant, she was permitted—I may say encouraged—to repeat her visits with my sister, and gradually to occupy a kind of footing of familiarity in the family. I have," said Mr. Dombey, in the tone of a man who was making a great and valuable concession, "I have a respect for Miss Tox. She has been so obliging as to render many little services in my house: trifling and insignificant services perhaps, Major, but not to be disparaged on that account: and I hope I have had the good fortune to be enabled to acknowledge them by such attention and notice as it has been in my power to bestow. I hold myself indebted to Miss Tox, Major," added Mr. Dombey, with a slight wave of his hand, "for the pleasure of your acquaintance."

"Dombey," said the Major warmly; "no! No, Sir! Joseph Bagstock can never permit that assertion to pass uncontradicted. Your knowledge of old Joe, Sir, such as he is, and old Joe's knowledge of you, Sir, had its origin in a noble fellow, Sir—in a great creature, Sir. Dombey!" said the Major, with a struggle which it was not very difficult to parade, his whole life

being a struggle against all kinds of apoplectic symptoms, "we knew each other through your boy."

Mr. Dombey seemed touched, as it is not improbable the Major designed he should be, by this allusion. He looked down and sighed: and the Major, rousing himself fiercely, again said, in reference to the state of mind into which he felt himself in danger of falling, that this was weakness, and nothing should induce him to submit to it.

"Our friend had a remote connexion with that event," said the Major, "and all the credit that belongs to her, J. B. is willing to give her, Sir. Notwithstanding which, Ma'am," he added, raising his eyes from his plate, and casting them across Princess's Place, to where Miss Tox was at that moment visible at her window watering her flowers, "you're a scheming jade, Ma'am, and your ambition is a piece of monstrous impudence. If it only made yourself ridiculous, Ma'am," said the Major, rolling his head at the unconscious Miss Tox, while his starting eyes appeared to make a leap towards her, "you might do that to your heart's content, Ma'am, without any objection, I assure you, on the part of Bagstock." Here the Major laughed frightfully up in the tips of his ears and in the veins of his head. "But when, Ma'am," said the Major, "you compromise other people, and generous, unsuspecting people too, as a repayment for their condescension, you stir the blood of old Joe in his body."

"Major," said Mr. Dombey, reddening, "I hope you do not hint at anything so absurd on the part of Miss Tox as—"

"Dombey," returned the Major, "I hint at nothing. But Joey B. has lived in the world, Sir: lived in the world with his eyes open, Sir, and his ears cocked: and Joe tells you, Dombey, that there's a de-vilish artful and ambitious woman over the way."

Mr. Dombey involuntarily glanced over the way; and an angry glance he sent in that direction, too.

"That's all on such a subject that shall pass the lips of Joseph Bagstock," said the Major firmly. "Joe is not a tale-bearer, but there are times when he must speak, when he *will* speak!—confound your arts, Ma'am," cried the Major, again apostrophising his fair neighbour, with great ire—"when the provocation is too strong to admit of his remaining silent."

The emotion of this outbreak threw the Major into a paroxysm of horse's coughs, which held him for a long time. On recovering he added:

"And now, Dombey, as you have invited Joe—old Joe, who has no other merit, Sir, but that he is tough and hearty—to be your guest and guide at Leamington, command him in any way you please, and he is wholly yours. I don't know, Sir," said the Major, wagging his double chin with a jocose air, "what it is you people see in Joe to make you hold him in such great request, all of you; but this I know, Sir, that if he wasn't pretty tough, and obstinate in his refusals, you'd kill him among you with your invitations and so forth, in double quick time."

Mr. Dombey, in a few words, expressed his sense of the preference he received over those other distinguished members of society who were clamouring for the possession of Major Bagstock. But the Major cut him short by giving him to understand that he followed his own inclinations, and that they had risen up in a body and said with one accord, "J. B., Dombey is the man for you to choose as a friend."



The Major being by this time in a state of repletion, with essence of savoury pie oozing out at the corners of his eyes, and devilled grill and kidneys tightening his cravat: and the time moreover approaching for the departure of the railway train to Birmingham, by which they were to leave town: the Native got him into his great coat with immense difficulty, and buttoned him up until his face looked staring and gasping, over the top of that garment, as if he were in a barrel. The Native then handed him separately, and with a decent interval between each supply, his wash-leather gloves, his thick stick, and his hat; which latter article the Major wore with a rakish air on one side of his head, by way of toning down his remarkable visage. The Native had previously packed, in all possible and impossible parts of Mr. Dombey's chariot, which was in waiting, an unusual quantity of carpet-bags and small portmanteaus, no less apoplectic in appearance than the Major himself: and having filled his own pockets with Seltzer water, East India sherry, sandwiches, shawls, telescopes, maps, and newspapers, any or all of which light baggage the Major might require at any instant of the journey, he announced that everything was ready. To complete the equipment of this unfortunate foreigner (currently believed to be a prince in his own country), when he took his seat in the rumble by the side of Mr. Towlinson, a pile of the Major's cloaks and great-coats was hurled upon him by the landlord, who aimed at him from the pavement with those great missiles like a Titan, and so covered him up, that he proceeded, in a living tomb, to the railroad station.

But before the carriage moved away, and while the Native was in the act of sepulture, Miss Tox appearing at her window, waved a lily-white handkerchief. Mr. Dombey received this parting salutation very coldly—very coldly even for him—and honouring her with the slightest possible inclination of his head, leaned back in the carriage with a very discontented look. His marked behaviour seemed to afford the Major (who was all politeness in his recognition of Miss Tox) unbounded satisfaction; and he sat for a long time afterwards, leering, and choking, like an over-fed Mephistopheles.

During the bustle of preparation at the railway, Mr. Dombey and the Major walked up and down the platform side by side; the former taciturn and gloomy, and the latter entertaining him, or entertaining himself, with a variety of anecdotes and reminiscences, in most of which Joe Bagstock was the principal performer. Neither of the two observed that in the course of these walks, they attracted the attention of a working man who was standing near the engine, and who touched his hat every time they passed; for Mr. Dombey habitually looked over the vulgar herd, not at them; and the Major was looking, at the time, into the core of one of his stories. At length, however, this man stepped before them as they turned round, and pulling his hat off, and keeping it off, ducked his head to Mr. Dombey.

"Beg your pardon, Sir," said the man, "but I hope you're a doin' pretty well, Sir."

He was dressed in a canvass suit abundantly besmeared with coal-dust and oil, and had cinders in his whiskers, and a smell of half-slaked ashes all over him. He was not a bad-looking fellow, nor even what could be fairly called a dirty-looking fellow, in spite of this; and, in short, he was Mr. Toodle, professionally clothed.

"I shall have the honour of stokin' of you down, Sir," said Mr. Toodle. "Beg your pardon, Sir. I hope you find yourself a coming round?"

Mr. Dombey looked at him, in return for his tone of interest, as if a man like that would make his very eyesight dirty.

"'Scuse the liberty, Sir," said Toodle, seeing he was not clearly remembered, "but my wife Polly, as was called Richards in your family—"

A change in Mr. Dombey's face, which seemed to express recollection of him, and so it did, but it expressed in a much stronger degree an angry sense of humiliation, stopped Mr. Toodle short.

"Your wife wants money, I suppose," said Mr. Dombey, putting his hand in his pocket, and speaking (but that he always did) haughtily.

"No thank'ee, Sir," returned Toodle, "I can't say she does. I don't."

Mr. Dombey was stopped short now in his turn: and awkwardly: with his hand in his pocket.

"No Sir," said Toodle, turning his oilskin cap round and round; "we're a doin' pretty well Sir; we haven't no cause to complain in the worldly way Sir. We've had four more since then Sir, but we rubs on."

Mr. Dombey would have rubbed on to his own carriage, though in so doing he had rubbed the stoker underneath the wheels; but his attention was arrested by something in connection with the cap still going slowly round and round in the man's hand.

"We lost one babby," observed Toodle, "there's no denyin'."

"Lately," added Mr. Dombey, looking at the cap.

"No Sir, up'ard of three years ago, but all the rest is hearty. And in the matter o' readin' Sir," said Toodle, ducking again, as if to remind Mr. Dombey of what had passed between them on that subject long ago, "them boys o' mine, they learned me, among 'em, arter all. They've made a verry tolerable scholar of me Sir, them boys."

"Come, Major!" said Mr. Dombey.

"Beg your pardon Sir," resumed Toodle, taking a step before them and deferentially stopping them again, still cap in hand: "I wouldn't have troubled you with such a pint except as a way of gettin' in the name of my son Biler—christened Robin—him as you was so good as make a Charitable Grinder on."

"Well, man," said Mr. Dombey in his severest manner. "What about him?"

"Why Sir," returned Toodle, shaking his head with a face of great anxiety and distress. "I'm forced to say Sir, that he's gone wrong."

"He has gone wrong, has he?" said Mr. Dombey, with a hard kind of satisfaction.

"He has fell into bad company, you see, genelman," pursued the father looking wistfully at both, and evidently taking the Major into the conversation with the hope of having his sympathy. "He has got into bad ways. God send he may come to again, genelman, but he's on the wrong track now! You could hardly be off hearing of it somehow, Sir," said Toodle, again addressing Mr. Dombey individually; "and it's better I should out and say my boy's gone rather wrong. Polly's dreadful down about it, genelman," said Toodle with the same dejected look, and another appeal to the Major.



"A son of this man's whom I caused to be educated, Major," said Mr. Dombey, giving him his arm. "The usual return!"

"Take advice from plain old Joe, and never educate that sort of people, Sir," returned the Major. "Damme Sir, it never does! It always fails!"

The simple father was beginning to submit that he hoped his son, the quondam Grinder, huffed and cuffed, and flogged and badged, and taught, as parrots are, by a brute jobbed into his place of schoolmaster with as much fitness for it as a hound, might not have been educated on quite a right plan in some undiscovered respect, when Mr. Dombey angrily repeating "The usual return!" led the Major away. And the Major being heavy to hoist into Mr. Dombey's carriage, elevated in mid-air, and having to stop and swear that he would flay the Native alive, and break every bone in his skin, and visit other physical torments upon him, every time he couldn't get his foot on the step, and fell back on that dark exile, had barely time before they started to repeat hoarsely that it would never do: that it always failed: and that if he were to educate 'his own vagabond,' he would certainly be hanged.

Mr. Dombey assented bitterly; but there was something more in his bitterness, and in his moody way of falling back in the carriage, and looking with knitted brows at the changing objects without, than the failure of that noble educational system administered by the Grinders' Company. He had seen upon the man's rough cap a piece of new crape, and he had assured himself, from his manner and his answers, that he wore it for *his* son.

So! from high to low, at home or abroad, from Florence in his great house to the coarse churl who was feeding the fire then smoking before them, every one set up some claim or other to a share in his dead boy, and was a bidder against him! Could he ever forget how that woman had wept over his pillow, and called him her own child! or how he, waking from his sleep, had asked for her, and had raised himself in his bed and brightened when she came in!

To think of this presumptuous raker among coals and ashes going on before there, with his sign of mourning! To think that he dared to enter, even by a common show like that, into the trial and disappointment of a proud gentleman's secret heart! To think that this lost child, who was to have divided with him his riches, and his projects, and his power, and allied with whom he was to have shut out all the world as with a double door of gold, should have let in such a herd to insult him with their knowledge of his defeated hopes, and their boasts of claiming community of feeling with himself, so far removed: if not of having crept into the place wherein he would have lorded it, alone!

He found no pleasure or relief in the journey. Tortured by these thoughts he carried monotony with him, through the rushing landscape, and hurried headlong, not through a rich and varied country, but a wilderness of blighted plans and gnawing jealousies. The very speed at which the train was whirled along, mocked the swift course of the young life that had been borne away so steadily and so inexorably to its fore-doomed end. The power that forced itself upon its iron way—its own—defiant of all paths and roads, piercing through the heart of every obstacle, and dragging living creatures of all classes, ages, and degrees behind it, was a type of the triumphant monster, Death.

Away, with a shriek, and a roar, and a rattle, from the town, burrowing among the dwellings of men and making the streets hum, flashing out into the meadows for a moment, mining in through the damp earth, booming on in darkness and heavy air, bursting out again into the sunny day so bright and wide; away, with a shriek, and a roar, and a rattle, through the fields, through the woods, through the corn, through the hay, through the chalk, through the mould, through the clay, through the rock, among objects close at hand and almost in the grasp, ever flying from the traveller, and a deceitful distance ever moving slowly with him: like as in the track of the remorseless monster, Death!

Through the hollow, on the height, by the heath, by the orchard, by the park, by the garden, over the canal, across the river, where the sheep are feeding, where the mill is going, where the barge is floating, where the dead are lying, where the factory is smoking, where the stream is running, where the village clusters, where the great cathedral rises, where the bleak moor lies, and the wild breeze smooths or ruffles it at its inconstant will; away, with a shriek, and a roar, and a rattle, and no trace to leave behind but dust and vapour: like as in the track of the remorseless monster, Death!

Breasting the wind and light, the shower and sunshine, away, and still away, it rolls and roars, fierce and rapid, smooth and certain, and great works and massive bridges crossing up above, fall like a beam of shadow an inch broad, upon the eye, and then are lost. Away, and still away, onward and onward ever: glimpses of cottage-homes, of houses, mansions, rich estates, of husbandry and handicraft, of people, of old roads and paths that look deserted, small, and insignificant as they are left behind: and so they do, and what else is there but such glimpses, in the track of the indomitable monster, Death!

Away, with a shriek, and a roar, and a rattle, plunging down into the earth again, and working on in such a storm of energy and perseverance, that amidst the darkness and whirlwind the motion seems reversed, and to tend furiously backward, until a ray of light upon the wet wall shows its surface flying past like a fierce stream. Away once more into the day, and through the day, with a shrill yell of exultation, roaring, rattling, tearing on, spurning everything with its dark breath, sometimes pausing for a minute where a crowd of faces are, that in a minute more are not: sometimes lapping water greedily, and before the spout at which it drinks has ceased to drip upon the ground, shrieking, roaring, rattling through the purple distance!

Louder and louder yet, it shrieks and cries as it comes tearing on resistless to the goal: and now its way, still like the way of Death, is strewn with ashes thickly. Everything around is blackened. There are dark pools of water, muddy lanes, and miserable habitations far below. There are jagged walls and falling houses close at hand, and through the battered roofs and broken windows, wretched rooms are seen, where want and fever hide themselves in many wretched shapes, while smoke, and crowded gables, and distorted chimneys, and deformity of brick and mortar penning up deformity of mind and body, choke the murky distance. As Mr. Dombey looks out of his carriage window, it is never in his thoughts that the monster who has brought him there has let the light of day in on these things: not made or caused them. It was the journey's fitting end, and might have been the end of everything; it was so ruinous and dreary.



So, pursuing the one course of thought, he had the one relentless monster still before him. All things looked black, and cold, and deadly upon him, and he on them. He found a likeness to his misfortune everywhere. There was a remorseless triumph going on about him, and it galled and stung him in his pride and jealousy, whatever form it took: though most of all when it divided with him the love and memory of his lost boy.

There was a face—he had looked upon it, on the previous night, and it on him with eyes that read his soul, though they were dim with tears, and hidden soon behind two quivering hands—that often had attended him in fancy, on this ride. He had seen it, with the expression of last night, timidly pleading to him. It was not reproachful, but there was something of doubt, almost of hopeful incredulity in it, which, as he once more saw that fade away into a desolate certainty of his dislike, was like reproach. It was a trouble to him to think of this face of Florence.

Because he felt any new compunction towards it? No. Because the feeling it awakened in him—of which he had had some old fore-shadowing in older times—was full-formed now, and spoke out plainly, moving him too much, and threatening to grow too strong for his composure. Because the face was abroad, in the expression of defeat and persecution that seemed to encircle him like the air. Because it barbed the arrow of that cruel and remorseless enemy on which his thoughts so ran, and put into its grasp a double-handed sword. Because he knew full well, in his own breast, as he stood there, tinging the scene of transition before him with the morbid colours of his own mind, and making it a ruin and a picture of decay, instead of hopeful change, and promise of better things, that life had quite as much to do with his complainings as death. One child was gone, and one child left. Why was the object of his hope removed instead of her?

The sweet, calm, gentle presence in his fancy, moved him to no reflection but that. She had been unwelcome to him from the first; she was an aggravation of his bitterness now. If his son had been his only child, and the same blow had fallen on him, it would have been heavy to bear; but infinitely lighter than now, when it might have fallen on her (whom he could have lost, or he believed it, without a pang), and had not. Her loving and innocent face rising before him, had no softening or winning influence. He rejected the angel, and took up with the tormenting spirit crouching in his bosom. Her patience, goodness, youth, devotion, love, were as so many atoms in the ashes upon which he set his heel. He saw her image in the blight and blackness all around him, not irradiating but deepening the gloom. More than once upon this journey, and now again as he stood pondering at this journey's end, tracing figures in the dust with his stick, the thought came into his mind, what was there he could interpose between himself and it?

The Major, who had been blowing and panting all the way down, like another engine, and whose eye had often wandered from his newspaper to leer at the prospect, as if there were a great procession of discomfited Miss Toxes pouring out in the smoke of the train, and flying away over the fields to hide themselves in any place of refuge, aroused his friend by informing him that the post-horses were harnessed and the carriage ready.

"Dombey," said the Major, rapping him on the arm with his cane,

"don't be thoughtful. It's a bad habit. Old Joe, Sir, wouldn't be as tough as you see him, if he had ever encouraged it. You are too great a man, Dombey, to be thoughtful. In your position, Sir, you're far above that kind of thing."

The Major, even in his friendly remonstrances, thus consulting the dignity and honour of Mr. Dombey, and showing a lively sense of their importance, Mr. Dombey felt more than ever disposed to defer to a gentleman possessing so much good sense and such a well-regulated mind; accordingly he made an effort to listen to the Major's stories, as they trotted along the turnpike road; and the Major, finding both the pace and the road a great deal better adapted to his conversational powers than the mode of travelling they had just relinquished, came out for his entertainment.

In this flow of spirits and conversation, only interrupted by his usual plethoric symptoms, and by intervals of lunch, and from time to time by some violent assault upon the Native, who wore a pair of ear-rings in his dark-brown ears, and on whom his European clothes sat with an outlandish impossibility of adjustment—being, of their own accord, and without any reference to the tailor's art, long where they ought to be short, short where they ought to be long, tight where they ought to be loose, and loose where they ought to be tight—and to which he imparted a new grace, whenever the Major attacked him, by shrinking into them like a shrivelled nut, or a cold monkey—in this flow of spirits and conversation, the Major continued all day: so that when evening came on, and found them trotting through the green and leafy road near Leamington, the Major's voice, what with talking and eating and chuckling and choking, appeared to be in the box under the rumble, or in some neighbouring hay-stack. Nor did the Major improve it at the Royal Hotel, where rooms and dinner had been ordered, and where he so oppressed his organs of speech by eating and drinking, that when he retired to bed he had no voice at all, except to cough with, and could only make himself intelligible to the dark servant by gasping at him.

He not only arose next morning, however, like a giant refreshed, but conducted himself, at breakfast, like a giant refreshing. At this meal they arranged their daily habits. The Major was to take the responsibility of ordering everything to eat and drink; and they were to have a late breakfast together every morning, and a late dinner together every day. Mr. Dombey would prefer remaining in his own room, or walking in the country by himself, on that first day of their sojourn at Leamington; but next morning he would be happy to accompany the Major to the Pump-room, and about the town. So they parted until dinner-time. Mr. Dombey retired to nurse his wholesome thoughts in his own way. The Major, attended by the Native carrying a camp-stool, a great-coat, and an umbrella, swaggered up and down through all the public places: looking into subscription books to find out who was there, looking up old ladies by whom he was much admired, reporting J. B. tougher than ever, and puffing his rich friend Dombey wherever he went. There never was a man who stood by a friend more staunchly than the Major, when in puffing him, he puffed himself.

It was surprising how much new conversation the Major had to let off at dinner-time, and what occasion he gave Mr. Dombey to admire his



social qualities. At breakfast next morning, he knew the contents of the latest newspapers received; and mentioned several subjects in connexion with them, on which his opinion had recently been sought by persons of such power and might, that they were only to be obscurely hinted at. Mr. Dombey, who had been so long shut up within himself, and who had rarely, at any time, overstepped the enchanted circle within which the operations of Dombey and Son were conducted, began to think this an improvement on his solitary life; and in place of excusing himself for another day, as he had thought of doing when alone, walked out with the Major arm-in-arm.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### NEW FACES.

THE Major, more blue-faced and staring—more over-ripe, as it were, than ever—and giving vent, every now and then, to one of the horse's coughs, not so much of necessity as in a spontaneous explosion of importance, walked arm-in-arm with Mr. Dombey up the sunny side of the way, with his cheeks swelling over his tight stock, his legs majestically wide apart, and his great head wagging from side to side, as if he were remonstrating within himself on being such a captivating object. They had not walked many yards, before the Major encountered somebody he knew, nor many yards farther before the Major encountered somebody else he knew, but he merely shook his fingers at them as he passed, and led Mr. Dombey on: pointing out the localities as they went, and enlivening the walk with any current scandal suggested by them.

In this manner the Major and Mr. Dombey were walking arm-in-arm, much to their own satisfaction, when they beheld advancing towards them, a wheeled chair, in which a lady was seated, indolently steering her carriage by a kind of rudder in front, while it was propelled by some unseen power in the rear. Although the lady was not young, she was very blooming in the face—quite rosy—and her dress and attitude were perfectly juvenile. Walking by the side of the chair, and carrying her gossamer parasol with a proud and weary air, as if so great an effort must be soon abandoned and the parasol dropped, sauntered a much younger lady, very handsome, very haughty, very wilful, who tossed her head and drooped her eyelids, as though, if there were anything in all the world worth looking into, save a mirror, it certainly was not the earth or sky.

"Why, what the devil have we here, Sir!" cried the Major, stopping as this little cavalcade drew near.

"My dearest Edith!" drawled the lady in the chair, "Major Bagstock!"

The Major no sooner heard the voice, than he relinquished Mr. Dombey's arm, darted forward, took the hand of the lady in the chair and pressed it to his lips. With no less gallantry, the Major folded both his gloves upon his heart, and bowed low to the other lady. And now, the chair having stopped, the motive power became visible in the shape of a flushed page pushing behind, who seemed to have in part out-grown and in part out-pushed his strength, for when he stood upright he was tall, and wan, and thin, and his plight appeared the more forlorn from his having

injured the shape of his hat, by butting at the carriage with his head to urge it forward, as is sometimes done by elephants in Oriental countries.

"Joe Bagstock," said the Major to both ladies, "is a proud and happy man for the rest of his life."

"You false creature," said the old lady in the chair, insipidly. "Where do you come from? I can't bear you."

"Then suffer old Joe to present a friend, Ma'am," said the Major promptly, "as a reason for being tolerated. Mr. Dombey, Mrs. Skewton." The lady in the chair was gracious. "Mr. Dombey, Mrs. Granger." The lady with the parasol was faintly conscious of Mr. Dombey's taking off his hat, and bowing low. "I am delighted, Sir," said the Major, "to have this opportunity."

The Major seemed in earnest, for he looked at all the three, and leered in his ugliest manner.

"Mrs. Skewton, Dombey," said the Major, "makes havoc in the heart of old Josh."

Mr. Dombey signified that he didn't wonder at it.

"You perfidious goblin," said the lady in the chair, "have done! How long have you been here, bad man?"

"One day," replied the Major.

"And can you be a day, or even a minute," returned the lady, slightly settling her false curls and false eyebrows with her fan, and showing her false teeth, set off by her false complexion, "in the garden of what's-its-name—"

"Eden I suppose, Mama," interrupted the younger lady, scornfully.

"My dear Edith," said the other, "I cannot help it. I never can remember those frightful names—without having your whole Soul and Being inspired by the sight of Nature; by the perfume," said Mrs. Skewton, rustling a handkerchief that was faint and sickly with essences, "of her artless breath, you creature!"

The discrepancy between Mrs. Skewton's fresh enthusiasm of words, and forlornly faded manner, was hardly less observable than that between her age, which was about seventy, and her dress, which would have been youthful for twenty-seven. Her attitude in the wheeled chair (which she never varied) was one in which she had been taken in a barouche, some fifty years before, by a then fashionable artist who had appended to his published sketch the name of Cleopatra: in consequence of a discovery made by the critics of the time, that it bore an exact resemblance to that Princess as she reclined on board her galley. Mrs. Skewton was a beauty then, and bucks threw wine-glasses over their heads by dozens in her honour. The beauty and the barouche had both passed away, but she still preserved the attitude, and for this reason expressly, maintained the wheeled chair and the butting page: there being nothing whatever, except the attitude, to prevent her from walking.

"Mr. Dombey is devoted to Nature, I trust?" said Mrs. Skewton, settling her diamond brooch. And by the way, she chiefly lived upon the reputation of some diamonds, and her family connections.

"My friend Dombey, Ma'am," returned the Major, "may be devoted to her in secret, but a man who is paramount in the greatest city in the universe—"



"No one can be a stranger," said Mrs. Skewton, "to Mr. Dombey's immense influence."

As Mr. Dombey acknowledged the compliment with a bend of his head, the younger lady glancing at him, met his eyes.

"You reside here, Madam?" said Mr. Dombey, addressing her.

"No, we have been to a great many places. To Harrowgate, and Scarborough, and into Devonshire. We have been visiting, and resting here and there. Mama likes change."

"Edith of course does not," said Mrs. Skewton, with a ghastly archness.

"I have not found that there is any change in such places," was the answer, delivered with supreme indifference.

"They libel me. There is only one change, Mr. Dombey," observed Mrs. Skewton, with a mincing sigh, "for which I really care, and that I fear I shall never be permitted to enjoy. People cannot spare one. But seclusion and contemplation are my what's-his-name—"

"If you mean Paradise, Mama, you had better say so, to render yourself intelligible," said the younger lady.

"My dearest Edith," returned Mrs. Skewton, "you know that I am wholly dependant upon you for those odious names. I assure you, Mr. Dombey, Nature intended me for an Arcadian. I am thrown away in society. Cows are my passion. What I have ever sighed for, has been to retreat to a Swiss farm, and live entirely surrounded by cows—and china."

This curious association of objects, suggesting a remembrance of the celebrated bull who got by mistake into a crockery shop, was received with perfect gravity by Mr. Dombey, who intimated his opinion that Nature was, no doubt, a very respectable institution.

"What I want," drawled Mrs. Skewton, pinching her shrivelled throat, "is heart." It was frightfully true in one sense, if not in that in which she used the phrase. "What I want, is frankness, confidence, less conventionality, and freer play of soul. We are so dreadfully artificial."

We were, indeed.

"In short," said Mrs. Skewton, "I want Nature everywhere. It would be so extremely charming."

"Nature is inviting us away now, Mama, if you are ready," said the younger lady, curling her handsome lip. At this hint, the wan page, who had been surveying the party over the top of the chair, vanished behind it as if the ground had swallowed him up.

"Stop a moment, Withers!" said Mrs. Skewton, as the chair began to move; calling to the page with all the languid dignity with which she had called in days of yore to a coachman with a wig, cauliflower nosegay, and silk stockings. "Where are you staying, abomination?"

The Major was staying at the Royal Hotel, with his friend Dombey.

"You may come and see us any evening when you are good," lisped Mrs. Skewton. "If Mr. Dombey will honour us, we shall be happy. Withers, go on!"

The Major again pressed to his blue lips the tips of the fingers that were disposed on the ledge of the wheeled chair with careful carelessness; after the Cleopatra model: and Mr. Dombey bowed. The elder lady honoured them both with a very gracious smile and a girlish wave of her hand; the younger lady with the very slightest inclination of her head that common courtesy allowed.

The last glimpse of the wrinkled face of the mother, with that patched colour on it which the sun made infinitely more haggard and dismal than any want of colour could have been, and of the proud beauty of the daughter with her graceful figure and erect deportment, engendered such an involuntary disposition on the part of both the Major and Mr. Dombey to look after them, that they both turned at the same moment. The Page, nearly as much aslant as his own shadow, was toiling after the chair, uphill, like a slow battering-ram; the top of Cleopatra's bonnet was fluttering in exactly the same corner to the inch as before; and the Beauty, loitering by herself a little in advance, expressed in all her elegant form, from head to foot, the same supreme disregard of everything and everybody.

"I tell you what, Sir," said the Major, as they resumed their walk again. "If Joe Bagstock were a younger man, there's not a woman in the world whom he'd prefer for Mrs. Bagstock to that woman. By George, Sir!" said the Major, "she's superb!"

"Do you mean the daughter?" inquired Mr. Dombey.

"Is Joey B. a turnip, Dombey," said the Major, "that he should mean the mother."

"You were complimentary to the mother," returned Mr. Dombey.

"An ancient flame Sir," chuckled Major Bagstock. "De-vilish ancient. I humour her."

"She impresses me as being perfectly genteel," said Mr. Dombey.

"Genteel, Sir," said the Major, stopping short, and staring in his companion's face. "The Honourable Mrs. Skewton, Sir, is sister to the late Lord Feenix, and aunt to the present Lord. The family are not wealthy—they're poor, indeed—and she lives upon a small jointure; but if you come to blood Sir!" The Major gave a flourish with his stick and walked on again, in despair of being able to say what you came to, if you came to that.

"You addressed the daughter, I observed," said Mr. Dombey, after a short pause, "as Mrs. Granger."

"Edith Skewton, Sir," returned the Major, stopping short again, and punching a mark in the ground with his cane, to represent her, "married (at eighteen) Granger of Ours;" whom the Major indicated by another punch. "Granger, Sir," said the Major, tapping the last ideal portrait, and rolling his head, emphatically, "was Colonel of Ours; a de-vilish handsome fellow, Sir, of forty-one. He died, Sir, in the second year of his marriage." The Major ran the representative of the deceased Granger through and through the body with his walking-stick, and went on again, carrying his stick over his shoulder.

"How long is this ago?" asked Mr. Dombey, making another halt.

"Edith Granger, Sir," replied the Major, shutting one eye, putting his head on one side, passing his cane into his left hand, and smoothing his shirt-frill with his right, "is, at this present time, not quite thirty. And, damme, Sir," said the Major, shouldering his stick once more, and walking on again, "she's a peerless woman!"

"Was there any family?" asked Mr. Dombey presently.

"Yes, Sir," said the Major. "There was a boy."

Mr. Dombey's eyes sought the ground, and a shade came over his face.

"Who was drowned, Sir," pursued the Major, "when a child of four or five years old."



"Indeed?" said Mr. Dombey, raising his head.

"By the upsetting of a boat in which his nurse had no business to have put him," said the Major. "That's *his* history. Edith Granger is Edith Granger still; but if tough old Joey B., Sir, were a little younger and a little richer, the name of that immortal paragon should be Bagstock."

The Major heaved his shoulders, and his cheeks, and laughed more like an over-fed Mephistopheles than ever, as he said the words.

"Provided the lady made no objection, I suppose?" said Mr. Dombey coldly.

"By Gad, Sir," said the Major, "the Bagstock breed are not accustomed to that sort of obstacle. Though it's true enough that Edith might have married twenty times, but for being proud, Sir, proud."

Mr. Dombey seemed, by his face, to think no worse of her for that.

"It's a great quality after all," said the Major. "By the Lord, it's a high quality! Dombey! You are proud yourself, and your friend, Old Joe, respects you for it, Sir."

With this tribute to the character of his ally, which seemed to be wrung from him by the force of circumstances and the irresistible tendency of their conversation, the Major closed the subject, and glided into a general exposition of the extent to which he had been beloved and doted on by splendid women and brilliant creatures.

On the next day but one, Mr. Dombey and the Major encountered the honourable Mrs. Skewton and her daughter in the Pump-room; on the day after, they met them again very near the place where they had met them first. After meeting them thus, three or four times in all, it became a point of mere civility to old acquaintances that the Major should go there one evening. Mr. Dombey had not originally intended to pay visits, but on the Major announcing this intention, he said he would have the pleasure of accompanying him. So the Major told the Native to go round before dinner, and say, with his and Mr. Dombey's compliments, that they would have the honour of visiting the ladies that same evening, if the ladies were alone. In answer to which message, the Native brought back a very small note with a very large quantity of scent about it, indited by the Honourable Mrs. Skewton to Major Bagstock, and briefly saying, "You are a shocking bear and I have a great mind not to forgive you, but if you are very good indeed," which was underlined, "you may come. Compliments (in which Edith unites) to Mr. Dombey."

The Honourable Mrs. Skewton and her daughter, Mrs. Granger, resided while at Leamington, in lodgings that were fashionable enough and dear enough, but rather limited in point of space and conveniences; so that the Honourable Mrs. Skewton, being in bed, had her feet in the window and her head in the fire-place, while the Honourable Mrs. Skewton's maid was quartered in a closet within the drawing-room, so extremely small, that, to avoid developing the whole of its accommodations, she was obliged to writhe in and out of the door like a beautiful serpent. Withers, the wan page, slept out of the house immediately under the tiles at a neighbouring milk-shop; and the wheeled chair, which was the stone of that young Sisyphus, passed the night in a shed belonging to the same dairy, where new-laid eggs were produced by the poultry connected with the establishment, who roosted on a broken donkey-cart, persuaded, to all appearance, that it grew there, and was a species of tree.

Mr. Dombey and the Major found Mrs. Skewton arranged, as Cleopatra, among the cushions of a sofa: very airily dressed: and certainly not resembling Shakspeare's Cleopatra, whom age could not wither. On their way up stairs they had heard the sound of a harp, but it had ceased on their being announced, and Edith now stood beside it handsomer and haughtier than ever. It was a remarkable characteristic of this lady's beauty that it appeared to vaunt and assert itself without her aid, and against her will. She knew that she was beautiful: it was impossible that it could be otherwise: but she seemed with her own pride to defy her very self.

Whether she held cheap, attractions that could only call forth admiration that was worthless to her, or whether she designed to render them more precious to admirers by this usage of them, those to whom they *were* precious seldom paused to consider.

"I hope, Mrs. Granger," said Mr. Dombey, advancing a step towards her, "we are not the cause of your ceasing to play?"

"*You?* oh no!"

"Why do you not go on, then, my dearest Edith?" said Cleopatra.

"I left off as I began—of my own fancy."

The exquisite indifference of her manner in saying this: an indifference quite removed from dullness or insensibility, for it was pointed with proud purpose: was well set off by the carelessness with which she drew her hand across the strings, and came from that part of the room.

"Do you know, Mr. Dombey," said her languishing mother, playing with a hand-screen, "that occasionally my dearest Edith and myself actually almost differ—"

"Not quite, sometimes, Mama?" said Edith.

"Oh never quite, my darling! Fie, fie, it would break my heart," returned her mother, making a faint attempt to pat her with the screen, which Edith made no movement to meet, "—about these cold conventionalities of manner that are observed in little things? Why are we not more natural! Dear me! With all those yearnings, and gushings, and impulsive throbings that we have implanted in our souls, and which are so very charming, why are we not more natural?"

Mr. Dombey said it was very true, very true.

"We could be more natural I suppose if we tried?" said Mrs. Skewton.

Mr. Dombey thought it possible.

"Devil a bit, Ma'am," said the Major. "We could'n't afford it. Unless the world was peopled with J. B.'s—tough and blunt old Joes, Ma'am, plain red herrings with hard roes, Sir—we couldn't afford it. It wouldn't do."

"You naughty Infidel," said Mrs. Skewton, "be mute."

"Cleopatra commands," returned the Major, kissing his hand, "and Antony Bagstock obeys."

"The man has no sensitiveness," said Mrs. Skewton, cruelly holding up the hand-screen so as to shut the Major out. "No sympathy. And what do we live for *but* sympathy! What else is so extremely charming! Without that gleam of sunshine on our cold cold earth," said Mrs. Skewton, arranging her lace tucker, and complacently observing the effect of her bare lean arm, looking upward from the wrist, "how could we possibly bear it? In short, obdurate man!" glancing at the Major, round the



screen, "I would have my world all heart; and Faith is so excessively charming, that I won't allow you to disturb it, do you hear?"

The Major replied that it was hard in Cleopatra to require the world to be all heart, and yet to appropriate to herself the hearts of all the world; which obliged Cleopatra to remind him that flattery was insupportable to her, and that if he had the boldness to address her in that strain any more, she would positively send him home.

Withers the Wan, at this period, handing round the tea, Mr. Dombey again addressed himself to Edith.

"There is not much company here, it would seem?" said Mr. Dombey, in his own portentous gentlemanly way.

"I believe not. We see none."

"Why really," observed Mrs. Skewton from her couch, "there are no people here just now with whom we care to associate."

"They have not enough heart," said Edith, with a smile. The very twilight of a smile: so singularly were its light and darkness blended.

"My dearest Edith rallies me, you see!" said her mother shaking her head: which shook a little of itself sometimes, as if the palsy twinkled now and then in opposition to the diamonds. "Wicked one!"

"You have been here before, if I am not mistaken?" said Mr. Dombey. Still to Edith.

"Oh, several times. I think we have been everywhere."

"A beautiful country!"

"I suppose it is. Everybody says so."

"Your cousin Feenix raves about it Edith," interposed her mother from her couch.

The daughter slightly turned her graceful head, and raising her eyebrows by a hair's-breadth as if her cousin Feenix were of all the mortal world the least to be regarded, turned her eyes again towards Mr. Dombey.

"I hope, for the credit of my good taste, that I am tired of the neighbourhood," she said.

"You have almost reason to be, Madam," he replied, glancing at a variety of landscape drawings, of which he had already recognised several as representing neighbouring points of view, and which were strewn abundantly about the room, "if these beautiful productions are from your hand."

She gave him no reply, but sat in a disdainful beauty, quite amazing.

"Have they that interest?" said Mr. Dombey. "Are they yours?"

"Yes."

"And you play, I already know."

"Yes."

"And sing?"

"Yes."

She answered all these questions with a strange reluctance; and with that remarkable air of opposition to herself, already noticed as belonging to her beauty. Yet she was not embarrassed, but wholly self-possessed. Neither did she seem to wish to avoid the conversation, for she addressed her face, and—so far as she could—her manner also, to him; and continued to do so, when he was silent.

"You have many resources against weariness at least," said Mr. Dombey.

"Whatever their efficiency may be," she returned, "you know them all now. I have no more."

"May I hope to prove them all?" said Mr. Dombey, with solemn gallantry, laying down a drawing he had held, and motioning towards the harp.

"Oh certainly! If you desire it!"

She rose as she spoke, and crossing by her mother's couch, and directing a stately look towards her, which was instantaneous in its duration, but inclusive (if any one had seen it) of a multitude of expressions, among which that of the twilight smile, without the smile itself, overshadowed all the rest, went out of the room.

The Major, who was quite forgiven by this time, had wheeled a little table up to Cleopatra, and was sitting down to play picquet with her. Mr. Dombey, not knowing the game, sat down to watch them for his edification until Edith should return.

"We are going to have some music, Mr. Dombey, I hope?" said Cleopatra.

"Mrs. Granger has been kind enough to promise so," said Mr. Dombey.

"Ah! That's very nice. Do you propose, Major?"

No Ma'am," said the Major. "Couldn't do it."

"You're a barbarous being," replied the lady, "and my hand's destroyed. You are fond of music, Mr. Dombey?"

"Eminently so," was Mr. Dombey's answer.

"Yes. It's very nice," said Cleopatra looking at her cards. "So much heart in it—undeveloped recollections of a previous state of existence—and all that—which is so truly charming. Do you know," simpered Cleopatra, reversing the knave of clubs, who had come into her game with his heels uppermost, "that if anything could tempt me to put a period to my life, it would be curiosity to find out what it's all about, and what it means; there are so many provoking mysteries, really, that are hidden from us. Major, you to play!"

The Major played; and Mr. Dombey, looking on for his instruction, would soon have been in a state of dire confusion, but that he gave no attention to the game whatever, and sat wondering instead when Edith would come back.

She came at last, and sat down to her harp, and Mr. Dombey rose and stood beside her, listening. He had little taste for music, and no knowledge of the strain she played, but he saw her bending over it, and perhaps he heard among the sounding strings some distant music of his own, that tamed the monster of the iron road, and made it less inexorable.

Cleopatra had a sharp eye, verily, 'at picquet. It glistened like a bird's, and did not fix itself upon the game, but pierced the room from end to end, and gleamed on harp, performer, listener, everything.

When the haughty beauty had concluded, she arose, and receiving Mr. Dombey's thanks and compliments in exactly the same manner as before, went with scarcely any pause, to the piano, and began there.

Edith Granger, any song but that! Edith Granger, you are very handsome, and your touch upon the keys is brilliant, and your voice is deep and rich; but not the air that his neglected daughter sang to his dead son!

Alas he knows it not; and if he did, what air of hers would stir him,



rigid man! Sleep, lonely Florence, sleep! Peace in thy dreams, although the night has turned dark, and the clouds are gathering, and threaten to discharge themselves in hail!

## CHAPTER XXII.

### A TRIFLE OF MANAGEMENT BY MR. CARKER THE MANAGER.

MR. CARKER the Manager sat at his desk, smooth and soft as usual, reading those letters which were reserved for him to open, backing them occasionally with such memoranda and references as their business purport required, and parcelling them out into little heaps for distribution through the several departments of the House. The post had come in heavy that morning, and Mr. Carker the Manager had a good deal to do.

The general action of a man so engaged—pausing to look over a bundle of papers in his hand, dealing them round in various portions, taking up another bundle and examining its contents with knitted brows and pursed-out lips—dealing, and sorting, and pondering by turns—would easily suggest some whimsical resemblance to a player at cards. The face of Mr. Carker the Manager was in good keeping with such a fancy. It was the face of a man who studied his play, warily: who made himself master of all the strong and weak points of the game: who registered the cards in his mind as they fell about him, knew exactly what was on them, what they missed, and what they made: who was crafty to find out what the other players held, and who never betrayed his own hand.

The letters were in various languages, but Mr. Carker the Manager read them all. If there had been anything in the offices of Dombey and Son that he could *not* read, there would have been a card wanting in the pack. He read almost at a glance, and made combinations of one letter with another and one business with another as he went on, adding new matter to the heaps—much as a man would know the cards at sight, and work out their combinations in his mind after they were turned. Something too deep for a partner, and much too deep for an adversary, Mr. Carker the Manager sat in the rays of the sun that came down slanting on him through the skylight, playing his game alone.

And although it is not among the instincts wild or domestic of the cat tribe to play at cards, feline from sole to crown was Mr. Carker the Manager, as he basked in the strip of summer-light and warmth that shone upon his table and the ground as if they were a crooked dial-plate, and himself the only figure on it. With hair and whiskers deficient in colour at all times, but feebler than common in the rich sunshine, and more like the coat of a sandy tortoise-shell cat; with long nails, nicely pared and sharpened; with a natural antipathy to any speck of dirt, which made him pause sometimes and watch the falling motes of dust, and rub them off his smooth white hand or glossy linen: Mr. Carker the Manager, sly of manner, sharp of tooth, soft of foot, watchful of eye, oily of tongue, cruel of heart, nice of habit, sat with a dainty stedfastness and patience at his work, as if he were waiting at a mouse's hole.

At length the letters were disposed of, excepting one which he reserved

for a particular audience. Having locked the more confidential correspondence in a drawer, Mr. Carker the Manager rang his bell.

"Why do *you* answer it?" was his reception of his brother.

"The messenger is out, and I am the next," was the submissive reply.

"You are the next!" muttered the Manager. "Yes! Creditable to me! There!"

Pointing to the heaps of opened letters, he turned disdainfully away, in his elbow-chair, and broke the seal of that one which he held in his hand.

"I am sorry to trouble you, James," said the brother, gathering them up, "but —"

"Oh! You have something to say. I knew that. Well?"

Mr. Carker the Manager did not raise his eyes or turn them on his brother, but kept them on his letter, though without opening it.

"Well?" he repeated sharply.

"I am uneasy about Harriet."

"Harriet who? what Harriet? I know nobody of that name."

"She is not well, and has changed very much of late."

"She changed very much, a great many years ago," replied the Manager; "and that is all I have to say."

"I think if you would hear me—"

"Why should I hear you, Brother John?" returned the Manager, laying a sarcastic emphasis on those two words, and throwing up his head, but not lifting his eyes. "I tell you, Harriet Carker made her choice many years ago between her two brothers. She may repent it, but she must abide by it."

"Don't mistake me. I do not say she *does* repent it. It would be black ingratitude in me to hint at such a thing," returned the other. "Though believe me, James, I am as sorry for her sacrifice as you."

"As I?" exclaimed the Manager. "As I?"

"As sorry for her choice—for what you call her choice—as you are angry at it," said the Junior.

"Angry?" repeated the other, with a wide show of his teeth.

"Displeased. Whatever word you like best. You know my meaning. There is no offence in my intention."

"There is offence in everything you do," replied his brother, glancing at him with a sudden scowl, which in a moment gave place to a wider smile than the last. "Carry those papers away, if you please. I am busy."

His politeness was so much more cutting than his wrath, that the Junior went to the door. But stopping at it, and looking round, he said:

"When Harriet tried in vain to plead for me with you, on your first just indignation, and my first disgrace; and when she left you, James, to follow my broken fortunes, and devote herself, in her mistaken affection, to a ruined brother, because without her he had no one, and was lost; she was young and pretty. I think if you could see her now—if you would go and see her—she would move your admiration and compassion."

The Manager inclined his head, and showed his teeth, as who should say, in answer to some careless small-talk, "Dear me! Is that the case?" but said never a word.

"We thought in those days: you and I both: that she would marry young, and lead a happy and light-hearted life," pursued the other. "Oh



if you knew how cheerfully she cast those hopes away; how cheerfully she has gone forward on the path she took, and never once looked back; you never could say again that her name was strange in your ears. Never!"

Again the Manager inclined his head, and showed his teeth, and seemed to say, "Remarkable indeed! You quite surprise me!" And again he uttered never a word.

"May I go on?" said John Carker, mildly.

"On your way?" replied his smiling brother. "If you will have the goodness."

John Carker, with a sigh, was passing slowly out at the door, when his brother's voice detained him for a moment on the threshold.

"If she has gone, and goes, her own way cheerfully," he said, throwing the still unfolded letter on his desk, and putting his hands firmly in his pockets, "you may tell her that I go as cheerfully on mine. If she has never once looked back, you may tell her that I have, sometimes, to recal her taking part with you, and that my resolution is no easier to wear away;" he smiled very sweetly here; "than marble."

"I tell her nothing of you. We never speak about you. Once a year, on your birthday, Harriet says always, 'Let us remember James by name, and wish him happy,' but we say no more."

"Tell it then, if you please," returned the other, "to yourself. You can't repeat it too often, as a lesson to you to avoid the subject in speaking to me. I know no Harriet Carker. There is no such person. *You* may have a sister; make much of her. I have none."

Mr. Carker the Manager took up the letter again, and waved it with a smile of mock courtesy towards the door. Unfolding it as his brother withdrew, and looking darkly after him as he left the room, he once more turned round in his elbow-chair, and applied himself to a diligent perusal of its contents.

It was in the writing of his great chief, Mr. Dombey, and dated from Leamington. Though he was a quick reader of all other letters, Mr. Carker read this slowly: weighing the words as he went, and bringing every tooth in his head to bear upon them. When he had read it through once, he turned it over again, and picked out these passages. 'I find myself benefited by the change, and am not yet inclined to name any time for my return.' 'I wish, Carker, you would arrange to come down once and see me here, and let me know how things are going on, in person.' 'I omitted to speak to you about young Gay. If not gone per Son and Heir, or if Son and Heir still lying in the Docks, appoint some other young man and keep him in the city for the present. I am not decided.' "Now that's unfortunate!" said Mr. Carker the Manager, expanding his mouth, as if it were made of India Rubber: "for he's far away!"

Still that passage, which was in a postscript, attracted his attention and his teeth, once more.

"I think," he said, "my good friend Captain Cuttle mentioned something about being towed along in the wake of that day. What a pity he's so far away!"

He refolded the letter, and was sitting trifling with it, standing it long-wise and broad-wise on his table, and turning it over and over on all sides—doing pretty much the same thing perhaps, by its contents—when Mr. Perch the messenger knocked softly at the door, and coming in on

tiptoe, bending his body at every step as if it were the delight of his life to bow, laid some papers on the table.

"Would you please to be engaged Sir?" asked Mr. Perch, rubbing his hands, and deferentially putting his head on one side, like a man who felt he had no business to hold it up in such a presence, and would keep it as much out of the way as possible.

"Who wants me?"

"Why Sir," said Mr. Perch, in a soft voice, "really nobody, Sir, to speak of at present. Mr. Gills the Ship's Instrument-maker Sir, has looked in, about a little matter of payment, he says; but I mentioned to him, Sir, that you was engaged several deep; several deep."

Mr. Perch coughed once behind his hand, and waited for further orders.

"Anybody else?"

"Well Sir," said Mr. Perch, "I wouldn't of my own self take the liberty of mentioning, Sir, that there was anybody else; but that same young lad that was here yesterday Sir, and last week, has been hanging about the place; and it looks Sir," added Mr. Perch, stopping to shut the door, "dreadful unbusiness-like to see him whistling to the sparrows down the court, and making of 'em answer him."

"You said he wanted something to do, didn't you Perch?" asked Mr. Carker, leaning back in his chair and looking at that officer.

"Why Sir," said Mr. Perch, coughing behind his hand again, "his expression certainly were that he was in wants of a sitiuation, and that he considered something might be done for him about the Docks, being used to fishing with a rod and line: but—" Mr. Perch shook his head very dubiously indeed.

"What does he say when he comes?" asked Mr. Carker.

"Indeed Sir," said Mr. Perch, coughing another cough behind his hand, which was always his resource as an expression of humility when nothing else occurred to him, "his observation generally air that he would humbly wish to see one of the gentlemen, and that he wants to earn a living. But you see, Sir," added Perch, dropping his voice to a whisper, and turning, in the inviolable nature of his confidence, to give the door a thrust with his hand and knee, as if that would shut it any more when it was shut already, "it's hardly to be bore Sir that a common lad like that should come a prowling here, and saying that his mother nursed our House's young gentleman, and that he hopes our House will give him a chance on that account. I am sure Sir," observed Mr. Perch, "that although Mrs. Perch was at that time nursing as thriving a little girl Sir as we've ever took the liberty of adding to our family, I wouldn't have made so free as drop a hint of her being capable of imparting nourishment, not if it was ever so!"

Mr. Carker grinned at him like a shark, but in an absent thoughtful manner.

"Whether," submitted Mr. Perch, after a short silence, and another cough, "it mightn't be best for me to tell him, that if he was seen here any more he would be given into custody; and to keep to it! With respect to bodily fear," said Mr. Perch, "I'm so timid, myself, by nature Sir, and my nerves is so unstrung by Mrs. Perch's state, that I could take my affidavit easy."

"Let me see this fellow, Perch," said Mr. Carker. "Bring him in!"



"Yes Sir. Begging your pardon Sir," said Mr. Perch, hesitating at the door, "he's rough Sir, in appearance."

"Never mind. If he's there, bring him in. I'll see Mr. Gills directly. Ask him to wait!"

Mr. Perch bowed; and shutting the door as precisely and carefully as if he were not coming back for a week, went on his quest among the sparrows in the court. While he was gone, Mr. Carker assumed his favourite attitude before the fire-place, and stood looking at the door; presenting, with his under lip tucked into the smile that showed his whole row of upper teeth, a singularly crouching appearance.

The messenger was not long in returning, followed by a pair of heavy boots that came bumping along the passage like boxes. With the unceremonious words "Come along with you!"—a very unusual form of introduction from his lips—Mr. Perch then ushered into the presence a strong-built lad of fifteen, with a round red face, a round sleek head, round black eyes, round limbs, and round body, who, to carry out the general rotundity of his appearance, had a round hat in his hand, without a particle of brim to it.

Obedient to a nod from Mr. Carker, Perch had no sooner confronted the visitor with that gentleman than he withdrew. The moment they were face to face alone, Mr. Carker, without a word of preparation, took him by the throat, and shook him until his head seemed loose upon his shoulders.

The boy, who in the midst of his astonishment could not help staring wildly at the gentleman with so many white teeth who was choking him; and at the office walls, as though determined, if he *were* choked, that his last look should be at the mysteries for his intrusion into which he was paying such a severe penalty, at last contrived to utter—

"Come Sir! You let me alone, will you!"

"Let you alone!" said Mr. Carker. "What! I have got you, have I?" There was no doubt of that, and tightly too. "You dog," said Mr. Carker; through his set jaws, "I'll strangle you!"

Biler whimpered, would he though? oh no he wouldn't—and what was he doing of—and why didn't he strangle somebody of his own size and not *him*: but Biler was quelled by the extraordinary nature of his reception, and, as his head became stationary, and he looked the gentleman in the face, or rather in the teeth, and saw him snarling at him, he so far forgot his manhood as to cry.

"I haven't done nothing to you Sir," said Biler, otherwise Rob, otherwise Grinder, and always Toodle.

"You young scoundrel!" replied Mr. Carker, slowly releasing him, and moving back a step into his favourite position. "What do you mean by daring to come here?"

"I didn't mean no harm Sir," whimpered Rob, putting one hand to his throat, and the knuckles of the other to his eyes. "I'll never come again Sir. I only wanted work."

"Work, young Cain that you are!" repeated Mr. Carker, cycling him narrowly. "An't you the idlest vagabond in London?"

The impeachment, while it much affected Mr. Toodle Junior, attached to his character so justly, that he could not say a word in denial. He stood looking at the gentleman, therefore, with a frightened, self-convicted, and remorseful air. As to his looking at him, it may be observed that he was fascinated by Mr. Carker and never took his round eyes off him for an instant.

"An't you a thief?" said Mr. Carker, with his hands behind him in his pockets.

"No Sir," pleaded Rob.

"You are!" said Mr. Carker.

"I an't indeed Sir," whimpered Rob. "I never did such a thing as thief Sir, if you'll believe me. I know I've been a going wrong Sir, ever since I took to bird-catching and walking-matching. I'm sure a cove might think," said Mr. Toodle Junior, with a burst of penitence, "that singing birds was innocent company, but nobody knows what harm is in them little creeturs and what they brings you down to."

They seemed to have brought *him* down to a velvetene jacket and trousers very much the worse for wear, a particularly small red waistcoat like a gorget, an interval of blue check, and the hat before mentioned.

"I an't been home twenty times since them birds got their will of me," said Rob, "and that's ten months. How can I go home when everybody's miserable to see me! I wonder," said Biler, blubbering outright, and smearing his eyes with his coat-cuff, "that I haven't been and drowned myself over and over again."

All of which, including his expression of surprise at not having achieved this last scarce performance, the boy said, just as if the teeth of Mr. Carker drew it out of him, and he had no power of concealing anything with that battery of attraction in full play.

"You're a nice young gentleman!" said Mr. Carker, shaking his head at him. "There's hemp-seed sown for *you*, my fine fellow!"

"I'm sure Sir," returned the wretched Biler, blubbering again, and again having recourse to his coat cuff: "I shouldn't care, sometimes, if it was growed too. My misfortunes all begun in wagging, Sir; but what could I do, exceptin' wag?"

"Excepting what?" said Mr. Carker.

"Wag, Sir. Wagging from school."

"Do you mean pretending to go there, and not going?" said Mr. Carker.

"Yes, Sir, that's wagging, Sir," returned the quondam Grinder, much affected. "I was chived through the streets, Sir, when I went there, and pounded when I got there. So I wagged, and hid myself, and that began it."

"And you mean to tell me," said Mr. Carker, taking him by the throat again, holding him out at arm's-length, and surveying him in silence for some moments, "that you want a place, do you?"

"I should be thankful to be tried, Sir," returned Toodle Junior, faintly.

Mr. Carker the Manager pushed him backward into a corner—the boy submitting quietly, hardly venturing to breathe, and never once removing his eyes from his face—and rang the bell.

"Tell Mr. Gills to come here."

Mr. Perch was too deferential to express surprise or recognition of the figure in the corner: and Uncle Sol appeared immediately.

"Mr. Gills!" said Carker, with a smile, "sit down. How do you do? You continue to enjoy your health, I hope?"

"Thank you, Sir," returned Uncle Sol, taking out his pocket-book, and handing over some notes as he spoke. "Nothing ails me in body but old age. Twenty-five, Sir.

"You are as punctual and exact, Mr. Gills," replied the smiling



Manager, taking a paper from one of his many drawers, and making an endorsement on it, while Uncle Sol looked over him, "as one of your own chronometers. Quite right."

"The Son and Heir has not been spoken, I find by the list, Sir," said Uncle Sol, with a slight addition to the usual tremor in his voice.

"The Son and Heir has not been spoken," returned Carker. "There seems to have been tempestuous weather, Mr. Gills, and she has probably been driven out of her course."

"She is safe, I trust in Heaven!" said old Sol.

"She is safe, I trust in Heaven!" assented Mr. Carker in that voiceless manner of his: which made the observant young Toodle tremble again. "Mr. Gills," he added aloud, throwing himself back in his chair, "you must miss your nephew very much?"

Uncle Sol, standing by him, shook his head and heaved a deep sigh.

"Mr. Gills," said Carker, with his soft hand playing round his mouth, and looking up into the Instrument-maker's face, "it would be company to you to have a young fellow in your shop just now, and it would be obliging me if you would give one house-room for the present. No, to be sure," he added quickly, in anticipation of what the old man was going to say, "there's not much business doing there, I know; but you can make him clean the place out, polish up the instruments; drudge, Mr. Gills. That's the lad!"

Sol Gills pulled down his spectacles from his forehead to his eyes, and looked at Toodle Junior standing upright in the corner: his head presenting the appearance (which it always did) of having been newly drawn out of a bucket of cold water; his small waistcoat rising and falling quickly in the play of his emotions; and his eyes intently fixed on Mr. Carker, without the least reference to his proposed master.

"Will you give him house-room, Mr. Gills?" said the Manager.

Old Sol, without being quite enthusiastic on the subject, replied that he was glad of any opportunity, however slight, to oblige Mr. Carker, whose wish on such a point was a command: and that the Wooden Midshipman would consider himself happy to receive in his berth any visitor of Mr. Carker's selecting.

Mr. Carker bared himself to the tops and bottoms of his gums: making the watchful Toodle Junior tremble more and more: and acknowledged the Instrument-maker's politeness in his most affable manner.

"I'll dispose of him so, then, Mr. Gills," he answered, rising, and shaking the old man by the hand, "until I make up my mind what to do with him, and what he deserves. As I consider myself responsible for him, Mr. Gills," here he smiled a wide smile at Rob, who shook before it: "I shall be glad if you'll look sharply after him, and report his behaviour to me. I'll ask a question or two of his parents as I ride home this afternoon—respectable people—to confirm some particulars in his own account of himself; and that done, Mr. Gills, I'll send him round to you to-morrow morning. Good bye!"

His smile at parting was so full of teeth, that it confused old Sol, and made him vaguely uncomfortable. He went home, thinking of raging seas, foundering ships, drowning men, an ancient bottle of Madeira never brought to light, and other dismal matter.

"Now, boy!" said Mr. Carker, putting his hand on young Toodle's

shoulder, and bringing him out into the middle of the room. "You have heard me?"

Rob said "Yes, Sir."

"Perhaps you understand," pursued his patron, "that if you ever deceive or play tricks with me, you had better have drowned yourself, indeed, once for all, before you came here?"

There was nothing in any branch of mental acquisition that Rob seemed to understand better than that.

"If you have lied to me," said Mr. Carker, "in anything, never come in my way again. If not, you may let me find you waiting for me somewhere near your mother's house this afternoon. I shall leave this at five o'clock, and ride there on horseback. Now, give me the address."

Rob repeated it slowly, as Mr. Carker wrote it down. Rob even spelt it over a second time, letter by letter, as if he thought that the omission of a dot or scratch would lead to his destruction. Mr. Carker then handed him out of the room: and Rob, keeping his round eyes fixed upon his patron to the last, vanished for the time being.

Mr. Carker the Manager did a great deal of business in the course of the day, and bestowed his teeth upon a great many people. In the office, in the court, in the street, and on 'Change, they glistened and bristled to a terrible extent. Five o'clock arriving, and with it Mr. Carker's bay horse, they got on horseback, and went gleaming up Cheapside.

As no one can easily ride fast, even if inclined to do so, through the press and throng of the city at that hour, and as Mr. Carker was not inclined, he went leisurely along, picking his way among the carts and carriages, avoiding whenever he could the wetter and more dirty places in the over-watered road, and taking infinite pains to keep himself and his steed clean. Glancing at the passers-by while he was thus ambling on his way, he suddenly encountered the round eyes of the sleek-headed Rob intently fixed upon his face as if they had never been taken off, while the boy himself, with a pocket-handkerchief twisted up like a speckled eel and girded round his waist, made a very conspicuous demonstration of being prepared to attend upon him, at whatever pace he might think proper to go.

This attention, however flattering, being one of an unusual kind, and attracting some notice from the other passengers, Mr. Carker took advantage of a clearer thoroughfare and a cleaner road, and broke into a trot. Rob immediately did the same. Mr. Carker presently tried a canter; Rob was still in attendance. Then a short gallop; it was all one to the boy. Whenever Mr. Carker turned his eyes to that side of the road, he still saw Toodle Junior holding his course, apparently without distress, and working himself along by the elbows after the most approved manner of professional gentlemen who get over the ground for wagers.

Ridiculous as this attendance was, it was a sign of an influence established over the boy, and therefore Mr. Carker, affecting not to notice it, rode away into the neighbourhood of Mr. Toodle's house. On his slackening his pace here, Rob appeared before him to point out the turnings; and when he called to a man at a neighbouring gateway to hold his horse, pending his visit to the Buildings that had succeeded Staggs's Gardens, Rob dutifully held the stirrup, while the Manager dismounted.

"Now, Sir," said Mr. Carker, taking him by the shoulder, "come along!"

The prodigal son was evidently nervous of visiting the parental abode;



but Mr. Carker pushing him on before, he had nothing for it but to open the right door, and suffer himself to be walked into the midst of his brothers and sisters, mustered in overwhelming force round the family tea-table. At sight of the prodigal in the grasp of a stranger, these tender relations united in a general howl, which smote upon the prodigal's breast so sharply when he saw his mother stand up among them, pale and trembling with the baby in her arms, that he lent his own voice to the chorus.

Nothing doubting now that the stranger, if not Mr. Ketch in person, was one of that company, the whole of the young family wailed the louder, while its more infantine members, unable to control the transports of emotion appertaining to their time of life, threw themselves on their backs like young birds when terrified by a hawk, and kicked violently. At length, poor Polly making herself audible, said, with quivering lips, "Oh Rob, my poor boy, what have you done at last!"

"Nothing mother," cried Rob, in a piteous voice, "ask the gentleman!"

"Don't be alarmed," said Mr. Carker, "I want to do him good."

At this announcement, Polly, who had not cried yet, began to do so. The elder Toodles, who appeared to have been meditating a rescue, unclenched their fists. The younger Toodles clustered round their mother's gown, and peeped from under their own chubby arms at their desperado brother and his unknown friend. Everybody blessed the gentleman with the beautiful teeth, who wanted to do good.

"This fellow," said Mr. Carker to Polly, giving him a gentle shake, "is your son, eh Ma'am?"

"Yes Sir," sobbed Polly, with a curtsy; "yes Sir."

"A bad son, I am afraid?" said Mr. Carker.

"Never a bad son to me Sir," returned Polly.

"To whom then?" demanded Mr. Carker.

"He has been a little wild Sir," replied Polly, checking the baby, who was making convulsive efforts with his arms and legs to launch himself on Biler, through the ambient air, "and has gone with wrong companions; but I hope he has seen the misery of that Sir, and will do well again."

Mr. Carker looked at Polly, and the clean room, and the clean children, and the simple Toodle face, combined of father and mother, that was reflected and repeated everywhere about him: and seemed to have achieved the real purpose of his visit.

"Your husband, I take it, is not at home?" he said.

"No Sir, replied Polly. "He's down the line at present."

The prodigal Rob, seemed very much relieved to hear it: though, still in the absorption of all his faculties in his patron, he hardly took his eyes from Mr. Carker's face, unless for a moment at a time to steal a sorrowful glance at his mother.

"Then," said Mr. Carker, "I'll tell you how I have stumbled on this boy of yours, and who I am, and what I am going to do for him."

This Mr. Carker did, in his own way: saying that he at first intended to have accumulated nameless terrors on his presumptuous head, for coming to the whereabout of Dombey and Son. That he had relented, in consideration of his youth, his professed contrition, and his friends. That he was afraid he took a rash step in doing anything for the boy, and one that might expose him to the censure of the prudent; but that he did it of himself and for himself, and risked the consequences single-handed; and

that his mother's past connection with Mr. Dombey's family had nothing to do with it, and that Mr. Dombey had nothing to do with it, but that he, Mr. Carker, was the be-all, and the end-all of this business. Taking great credit to himself for his goodness, and receiving no less from all the family then present, Mr. Carker signified, indirectly but still pretty plainly, that Rob's implicit fidelity, attachment, and devotion, were for evermore his due, and the least homage he could receive. And with this great truth Rob himself was so impressed, that, standing gazing on his patron with tears rolling down his cheeks, he nodded his shiny head until it seemed almost as loose as it had done under the same patron's hands that morning.

Polly, who had passed Heaven knows how many sleepless nights on account of this her dissipated firstborn, and had not seen him for weeks and weeks, could have almost kneeled to Mr. Carker the Manager, as to a Good Spirit—in spite of his teeth. But Mr. Carker rising to depart, she only thanked him with her mother's prayers and blessings; thanks so rich when paid out of the Heart's mint, especially for any service Mr. Carker had rendered, that he might have given back a large amount of change, and yet been overpaid.

As that gentleman made his way among the crowding children to the door, Rob retreated on his mother, and took her and the baby in the same repentant hug.

"I'll try hard, dear mother, now. Upon my soul I will!" said Rob.

"Oh do, my dear boy! I am sure you will, for our sakes and your own!" cried Polly, kissing him. "But you're coming back to speak to me, when you have seen the gentleman away?"

"I don't know, mother." Rob hesitated, and looked down. "Father—when's he coming home?"

"Not till two o'clock to-morrow morning."

"I'll come back, mother dear!" cried Rob. And passing through the shrill cry of his brothers and sisters in reception of this promise, he followed Mr. Carker out.

"What!" said Mr. Carker, who had heard this. "You have a bad father, have you?"

"No Sir!" returned Rob, amazed. "There ain't a better nor a kinder father going, than mine is."

"Why don't you want to see him then?" inquired his patron.

"There's such a difference between a father and a mother Sir," said Rob, after faltering for a moment. "He couldn't hardly believe yet that I was going to do better—though I know he'd try to—but a mother—*she* always believes what's good, Sir; at least I know my mother does, God bless her!"

Mr. Carker's mouth expanded, but he said no more until he was mounted on his horse, and had dismissed the man who held it, when, looking down from the saddle steadily into the attentive and watchful face of the boy, he said:

"You'll come to me to-morrow morning, and you shall be shown where that old gentleman lives; that old gentleman who was with me this morning; where you are going, as you heard me say."

"Yes Sir," returned Rob.

"I have a great interest in that old gentleman, and in serving him, you serve me, boy, do you understand? Well," he added, interrupting him,



for he saw his round face brighten when he was told that : " I see you do. I want to know all about that old gentleman, and how he goes on from day to day—for I am anxious to be of service to him—and especially who comes there to see him. Do you understand ? "

Rob nodded his stedfast face, and said, " Yes Sir," again.

" I should like to know that he has friends who are attentive to him, and that they don't desert him—for he lives very much alone now, poor fellow ; but that they are fond of him, and of his nephew who has gone abroad. There is a very young lady who may perhaps come to see him. I want particularly to know all about *her*."

" I'll take care Sir," said the boy.

" And take care," returned his patron, bending forward to advance his grinning face closer to the boy's, and pat him on the shoulder with the handle of his whip : " take care you talk about affairs of mine to nobody but me."

" To nobody in the world Sir," replied Rob, shaking his head.

" Neither there," said Mr. Carker, pointing to the place they had just left, " nor anywhere else. I'll try how true and grateful you can be. I'll prove you ! " Making this, by his display of teeth and by the action of his head, as much a threat as a promise, he turned from Rob's eyes, which were nailed upon him as if he had won the boy by a charm, body and soul, and rode away. But again becoming conscious, after trotting a short distance, that his devoted henchman, girt as before, was yielding him the same attendance, to the great amusement of sundry spectators, he reined up, and ordered him off. To insure his obedience, he turned in the saddle and watched him as he retired. It was curious to see that even then Rob could not keep his eyes wholly averted from his patron's face, but, constantly turning and turning again to look after him, involved himself in a tempest of buffetings and jostlings from the other passengers in the street : of which, in the pursuit of the one paramount idea, he was perfectly heedless.

Mr. Carker the Manager rode on at a foot pace, with the easy air of one who had performed all the business of the day in a satisfactory manner, and got it comfortably off his mind. Complacent and affable as man could be, Mr. Carker picked his way along the streets and hummed a soft tune as he went. He seemed to purr : he was so glad.

And in some sort, Mr. Carker, in his fancy, basked upon a hearth too. Coiled up snugly at certain feet, he was ready for a spring, or for a tear, or for a scratch, or for a velvet touch, as the humour took him and occasion served. Was there any bird in a cage, that came in for a share of his regards ?

" A very young lady ! " thought Mr. Carker the Manager, through his song. " Aye ! when I saw her last, she was a little child. With dark eyes and hair, I recollect, and a good face ; a very good face ! I dare say she's pretty."

More affable and pleasant yet, and humming his song until his many teeth vibrated to it, Mr. Carker picked his way along, and turned at last into the shady street where Mr. Dombey's house stood. He had been so busy, winding webs round good faces, and obscuring them with meshes, that he hardly thought of being at this point of his ride, until, glancing down the cold perspective of tall houses, he reined in his horse quickly within a few yards of the door. But to explain why Mr. Carker reined in his horse quickly, and what he looked at in no small surprise, a few digressive words are necessary.

Mr. Toots, emancipated from the Blimber thralldom and coming into the possession of a certain portion of his worldly wealth, "which," as he had been wont, during his last half-year's probation, to communicate to Mr. Feeder every evening as a new discovery, "the executors couldn't keep him out off," had applied himself, with great diligence, to the science of Life. Fired with a noble emulation to pursue a brilliant and distinguished career, Mr. Toots had furnished a choice set of apartments; had established among them a sporting bower, embellished with the portraits of winning horses, in which he took no particle of interest; and a divan, which made him poorly. In this delicious abode, Mr. Toots devoted himself to the cultivation of those gentle arts which refine and humanise existence, his chief instructor in which was an interesting character called the Game Chicken, who was always to be heard of at the bar of the Black Badger, wore a shaggy white great-coat in the warmest weather, and knocked Mr. Toots about the head three times a week, for the small consideration of ten and six per visit.

The Game Chicken, who was quite the Apollo of Mr. Toots's Pantheon, had introduced to him a marker who taught billiards, a Life Guard who taught fencing, a job-master who taught riding, a Cornish gentleman who was up to anything in the athletic line, and two or three other friends connected no less intimately with the fine arts. Under whose auspices Mr. Toots could hardly fail to improve apace, and under whose tuition he went to work.

But however it came about, it came to pass, even while these gentlemen had the gloss of novelty upon them, that Mr. Toots felt, he didn't know how, unsettled and uneasy. There were husks in his corn, that even Game Chickens couldn't peck up; gloomy giants in his leisure, that even Game Chickens couldn't knock down. Nothing seemed to do Mr. Toots so much good as incessantly leaving cards at Mr. Dombey's door. No tax-gatherer in the British Dominions—that wide-spread territory on which the sun never sets, and where the tax-gatherer never goes to bed—was more regular and persevering in his calls than Mr. Toots.

Mr. Toots never went upstairs; and always performed the same ceremonies, richly dressed for the purpose, at the hall door.

"Oh! Good morning!" would be Mr. Toots's first remark to the servant. "For Mr. Dombey," would be Mr. Toots's next remark, as he handed in a card. "For Miss Dombey," would be his next, as he handed in another.

Mr. Toots would then turn round as if to go away; but the man knew him by this time, and knew he wouldn't.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," Mr. Toots would say, as if a thought had suddenly descended on him. "Is the young woman at home?"

The man would rather think she was, but wouldn't quite know. Then he would ring a bell that rang upstairs, and would look up the staircase, and would say, yes she *was* at home, and was coming down. Then Miss Nipper would appear, and the man would retire.

"Oh! How de do?" Mr. Toots would say, with a chuckle and a blush.

Susan would thank him, and say she was very well.

"How's Diogenes going on?" would be Mr. Toots's second interrogation.



Very well indeed. Miss Florence was fonder and fonder of him every day. Mr. Toots was sure to hail this with a burst of chuckles, like the opening of a bottle of some effervescent beverage.

"Miss Florence is quite well, Sir," Susan would add.

"Oh, it's of no consequence, thank'ee," was the invariable reply of Mr. Toots; and when he had said so, he always went away very fast.

Now it is certain that Mr. Toots had a filmy something in his mind, which led him to conclude that if he could aspire successfully, in the fulness of time, to the hand of Florence, he would be fortunate and blest. It is certain that Mr. Toots, by some remote and roundabout road, had got to that point, and that there he made a stand. His heart was wounded; he was touched; he was in love. He had made a desperate attempt, one night, and had sat up all night for the purpose, to write an acrostic on Florence, which affected him to tears in the conception. But he never proceeded in the execution further than the words "For when I gaze,"—the flow of imagination in which he had previously written down the initial letters of the other seven lines, deserting him at that point.

Beyond devising that very artful and politic measure of leaving a card for Mr. Dombey daily, the brain of Mr. Toots had not worked much in reference to the subject that held his feelings prisoner. But deep consideration at length assured Mr. Toots that an important step to gain, was, the conciliation of Miss Susan Nipper, preparatory to giving her some inkling of his state of mind.

A little light and playful gallantry towards this lady seemed the means to employ in that early chapter of the history, for winning her to his interests. Not being able quite to make up his mind about it, he consulted the Chicken—without taking that gentleman into his confidence; merely informing him that a friend in Yorkshire had written to him (Mr. Toots) for his opinion on such a question. The Chicken replying that his opinion always was, "Go in and win," and, further, "When your man's before you and your work cut out, go in and do it," Mr. Toots considered this a figurative way of supporting his own view of the case, and heroically resolved to kiss Miss Nipper next day.

Upon the next day, therefore, Mr. Toots, putting into requisition some of the greatest marvels that Burgess and Co. had ever turned out, went off to Mr. Dombey's upon this design. But his heart failed him so much as he approached the scene of action, that, although he arrived on the ground at three o'clock in the afternoon, it was six before he knocked at the door.

Everything happened as usual, down to the point when Susan said her young mistress was well, and Mr. Toots said it was of no consequence. To her amazement, Mr. Toots, instead of going off, like a rocket, after that observation, lingered and chuckled.

"Perhaps you'd like to walk up stairs, Sir?" said Susan.

"Well, I think I will come in!" said Mr. Toots.

But instead of walking up stairs, the bold Toots made an awkward plunge at Susan when the door was shut, and embracing that fair creature, kissed her on the cheek.

"Go along with you!" cried Susan, "or I'll tear your eyes out."

"Just another!" said Mr. Toots.

"Go along with you!" exclaimed Susan, giving him a push. "Innocents like you, too! Who'll begin next! Go along, Sir!"

Susan was not in any serious strait, for she could hardly speak for laughing; but Diogenes, on the staircase, hearing a rustling against the wall, and a shuffling of feet, and seeing through the bannisters that there was some contention going on, and foreign invasion in the house, formed a different opinion, dashed down to the rescue, and in the twinkling of an eye had Mr. Toots by the leg.

Susan screamed, laughed, opened the street-door, and ran down stairs; the bold Toots tumbled staggering out into the street, with Diogenes holding on to one leg of his pantaloons, as if Burgess and Co. were his cooks, and had provided that dainty morsel for his holiday entertainment; Diogenes shaken off, rolled over and over in the dust, got up again, whirled round the giddy Toots and snapped at him: and all this turmoil, Mr. Carker, reining up his horse and sitting at a little distance, saw, to his amazement, issue from the stately house of Mr. Dombey.

Mr. Carker remained watching the discomfited Toots, when Diogenes was called in, and the door shut: and while that gentleman, taking refuge in a doorway near at hand, bound up the torn leg of his pantaloons with a costly silk handkerchief that had formed part of his expensive outfit for the adventure.

"I beg your pardon, Sir," said Mr. Carker, riding up, with his most propitiatory smile. "I hope you are not hurt?"

"Oh no, thank you," replied Mr. Toots, raising his flushed face, "it's of no consequence." Mr. Toots would have signified, if he could, that he liked it very much.

"If the dog's teeth have entered the leg, Sir—" began Carker, with a display of his own.

"No, thank you," said Mr. Toots, "it's all quite right. It's very comfortable, thank you."

"I have the pleasure of knowing Mr. Dombey," observed Carker.

"Have you though?" rejoined the blushing Toots.

"And you will allow me, perhaps, to apologise, in his absence," said Mr. Carker, taking off his hat, "for such a misadventure, and to wonder how it can possibly have happened."

Mr. Toots is so much gratified by this politeness, and the lucky chance of making friends with a friend of Mr. Dombey, that he pulls out his card-case, which he never loses an opportunity of using, and hands his name and address to Mr. Carker: who responds to that courtesy by giving him his own, and with that they part.

As Mr. Carker picks his way so softly past the house, glancing up at the windows, and trying to make out the pensive face behind the curtain looking at the children opposite, the rough head of Diogenes comes clambering up close by it, and the dog, regardless of all soothing, barks and growls, and makes at him from that height, as if he would spring down and tear him limb from limb.

Well spoken, Di, so near your mistress! Another, and another with your head up, your eyes flashing, and your vexed mouth worrying itself, for want of him! Another, as he picks his way along! You have a good scent, Di,—cats, boy, cats!



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